DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 187 782 UI 020 474

AUTHOR Anwar, Muhammad
TITLE Votes and Policies: Ethnic Minorities and the General Election 1979.
INSTITUTION Commission for Racial Equality, London (England).
PUB DATE Feb 80
NOTE 84p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adults; *Citizen Participation; Comparative Analysis; *Elections; Foreign Countries; *Minority Groups; *Political Attitudes; Political Issues; Politics; Public Opinion; Racial Differences; Social Differences; Surveys; Voter Registration; *Voting; Whites
IDENTIFIERS *Great Britain; Political Candidates

ABSTRACT

Surveys were conducted to present a picture of the participation of ethnic minorities in British elections. The surveys measured voter registration, knowledge and attitudes about issues, voting patterns in the 1979 General Election, candidates' attitudes about issues (especially race relations issues), and activities and election success of anti-immigration candidates. Findings included: (1) fewer ethnic minority people registered to vote compared to their white counterparts; (2) minority and white respondents rated prices and unemployment as the most important election issues; (3) minority respondents rated the improvement of matters concerning race relations higher than white voters; (4) Labour and Liberal candidates rated the need for improvement of race relations more highly than Conservative candidates; (5) respondents felt that relations between white and minority groups were deteriorating; (6) one-third of white respondents were opposed to encouraging minority groups to take a more active political role; (7) respondents were able to recall the name of Labour candidates, but not candidates from other parties; (8) minority voters reflected a higher rate of turnout than white voters; (9) more minority voters supported the Labour party than did the general electorate; (10) with an even distribution of the ethnic vote, the Conservative party would have won the 1979 election with a larger majority; (11) anti-immigration candidates were generally rejected; and (12) minority groups participated fully in the 1979 election and are likely to have increasing influence in British politics. (MK)

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VOTES AND POLICIES:

Ethnic Minorities and the General Election, 1979

Muhammad Anwar

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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COMMISSION FOR RACIAL EQUALITY

The Commission for Racial Equality was set up by the Race Relations Act, 1976 with the duties of:

a) working towards the elimination of discrimination;

b) promoting equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups generally; and

c) keeping under review the working of the Act, and, when required by the Secretary of State or when it otherwise thinks it necessary, to draw up and submit to the Secretary of State proposals for amending it.

Mr David Lane is Chairman of the Commission

Published by

Commission for Racial Equality
Elliot House
10-12 Allington Street
London, SW1E 5EH

© Commission for Racial Equality

First edition
February 1980

ISBN 0 902355 89 9

Price: £1.50

Printed by Interlink Longraph Ltd., London.

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Foreword

The Commission for Racial Equality was set up under the Race Relations Act 1976 to:

—work towards the elimination of racial discrimination;

—promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups generally; and

—keep under review the working of the Act and, when they are so required by the Secretary of State or otherwise think it necessary, draw up and submit to the Secretary of State proposals for amending it.

This clearly makes it necessary for the Commission to undertake research, advisory or promotional work in a number of fields — such as housing, education, social services, employment etc — in which equality of opportunity for all racial groups in this country has not yet been achieved. The attainment of this objective will be considerably facilitated by:

(a) a wider awareness of the need to involve ethnic minority residents and their white fellow-citizens in the decision-making processes which are involved in these and other fields;

(b) a wider awareness of the needs of all citizens in the community and greater willingness to devise policies to deal with those needs;

(c) encouragement to ethnic minority communities to take part in electing the decision-makers in our society.

Participation in elections is beneficial to race relations because it provides an opportunity for articulating needs and expressing views on various policies put forward by the political parties. However, it has been recognised for many years that ethnic minorities took less interest in the activities of political parties and participated less in elections compared to their white counterparts probably because they did not feel themselves to be part and parcel of our multi-racial society. Consequently, the political parties and other organisations have taken steps to involve them in the parties' activities in recent years and thus ensure that they contribute to the decision-making process at local government level and in parliamentary elections.

I commend this report because it demonstrates that ethnic minority voters participated in the 1979 General Election to a greater degree than has been recorded before. This is an encouraging indication of the extent to which they are becoming integrated into the British way of life. However, there is still a

long way to go before their participation in political life as Members of Parliament, local Councillors and party officials is full and effective. I hope that this report will be widely read by politicians and decision-makers in local and central Government as well as by ordinary voters whose views on race relations matters are just as crucial in ensuring that racial discrimination is eliminated in this country.

I also commend the report because the CRE has always emphasised that progress in achieving equality of opportunity in Britain depends on a strong lead by central Government and by politicians generally. The report shows that ethnic minorities are increasingly responsive to policies put forward through the political process and are increasingly willing to reflect their views on them at elections and in other ways. This augurs well for the future.

Peter Tucker
Chief Executive

Preface and Acknowledgements

Under the Race Relations Act 1976, the Commission for Racial Equality is empowered to undertake research itself and to assist others to undertake such research as can contribute to the discharge of its duties.

Participation in elections is a fundamental measure of the extent to which ethnic minorities exercise their right to the franchise in this country. For this reason, our predecessor, the Community Relations Commission, undertook research into the participation of ethnic minorities in the General Election in October 1974 and published the results in a report under the title *The Participation of Ethnic Minorities in the General Election October 1974*. This research project provided the benchmark against which the involvement of ethnic minorities in local and national elections was subsequently monitored by the Comission.

This report is the result of the most recent attempt to determine the extent to which the level of participation of ethnic minorities in elections may have changed over the past five years. In presenting the results, it also reports on efforts made by various political parties and voluntary organisations to encourage New Commonwealth-born citizens to not only take an interest in civic affairs but to actually participate in the General Election of May 3, 1979.

The research project reported here involved interviews with 6,957 respondents in different parts of the country. Since, however, the constituencies in which ethnic minorities live are predominantly inner city areas, the sample of respondents involved in this study was not completely representative in a statistical sense; nevertheless, 12 of the 24 constituencies were selected by random methods. The results should threfore provide useful indications about the dispositions of ethnic minority voters and candidates of all parties rather than be conclusive.

In preparing this report, we were aware that the commonly used terms by which respondents of different races are referred — 'black people', 'coloured people', 'New Commonwealth-born persons', 'immigrants', 'white people', 'indigenous people', 'ethnic minorities' etc. — may be misleading to some or be objectionable to others. Nevertheless, and in the absence of commonly agreed alternatives, we have used these terms to refer to those respondents who were from various ethnic minority communities or from the indigenous population in an arbitrary way since it would have been impossible to produce a readable

report otherwise. We have used the term 'electors' or 'voters' where the issue under discussion concerned those who were not 'candidates' standing for election. Similarly, in the interest of readability, we have used the term 'the ethnic vote' to refer to the voting power of members of ethnic minorities from the New Commonwealth. It therefore excludes the voting behaviour of people who are from other ethnic minorities in the community such as the Irish, Scots, Welsh, Ukrainians, Poles etc.

With regard to tables, we have presented the total sample sizes involved in each survey; however, the frequencies in the cells of some of these tables do not always add up to these sample sizes either because respondents gave more than one answer to a particular question or because we excluded the 'Don't Knows'.

Throughout the course of this research project, we were assisted in many ways by several individuals who freely gave us their enthusiastic co-operation. It is invidious to mention names; nevertheless, we are grateful to Dr. M. J. Le Lohe, Chairman of the Postgraduate School of Social Sciences at Bradford University, who assisted us with many aspects of the data collection and to John Hanvey and Elaine Wiskin of the Opinion Research Centre who took responsibility for the drudgery of fieldwork with equanimity. But, needless to say, this project could not have been undertaken at all were it not for the willing co-operation of all respondents, whether they were candidates, white or ethnic minority voters, who appreciated what we were trying to do and gave up their valuable time to participate in interviews or complete and return self-completed questionnaires. Dr. Muhammad Anwar was the officer responsible for co-ordinating the various phases of the project and for preparing this report.

Dr. Crispin Cross
Head, Research Department

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Chapter One: Introduction

Studies of the participation of the various elements in the community in British elections over the past decade have not fully tackled the role played by citizens from the New Commonwealth who have a right to vote in this country and by their British-born children. They have concentrated instead on the impact which the presence of visibly identifiable immigrants make on the rest of the British electorate.

However, it is increasingly pertinent to enquire about the dispositions of ethnic minority voters in this country, the majority of whom have lived in Britain for over a decade and, in the case of new voters, may have been born in this country and may therefore have spent their youthful years in full knowledge of their civic rights with specific reference to the exercise of the franchise.

It was during the 1964 General Election, and particularly in Smethwick, that immigration and race emerged as major factors in British politics but their emergence merely reinforced the already narrow focus on the impact of the presence of coloured minorities on the general electoral behaviour of the population. But what about the ethnic minority voter as a citizen who exercises his right to the franchise? Are there many such voters? Do they register their right to vote on the Electoral Register? Do they occupy a strategic position in the elections especially in marginal constituencies? How do they perceive the political issues which are reflected during elections? Do they participate on established party lines or do they vote for candidates who take an interest in the problems they face (i.e. immigration and race relations issues)? Are white voters likely to respond to ethnic minority candidates in the same way as they do to white candidates for the same party?

It was in order to deal with some of these questions and at the same time monitor the extent to which ethnic minority communities are integrated into the political process within the country as a whole, that our predecessor body the Community Relations Commission undertook a major study of how ethnic minorities voted in the October 1974 General Election[1]. That study showed that the ethnic minority vote played a significant part in determining the general outcome of that electon since a substantial majority of ethnic minority voters cast their vote for the Labour Party even though they were not inflexibly committed to that particular party. In other words, they formed part of the

'floating voter' population. That study also showed that members of ethnic minority communities who had the right to vote did not register themselves on the electoral register in anything like the proportion which they represented in the population of the various constituencies, a situation which indicated that those who did not register either saw themselves as being peripheral to the political process or, alternatively, did not feel sufficiently interested in political issues to participate or may well have had language difficulties.

The Commission for Racial Equality decided to continue this line of research in order to:

(a) monitor the extent to which ethnic minority communities are involving themselves at each stage of the political process starting from registration on the Electoral Register right through to the way they actually cast their vote;
(b) establish the way they responded to the issues which were discussed by candidates before the General Election in 1979 and on the basis of which they might cast their vote;
(c) determine how they responded to the efforts of the various political parties to involve them in the political process; and
(d) make members of ethnic minority groups, in particular, aware of their right to vote since their possession of this right places them in a far more favourable position than 'guest workers' in other European countries who do not have the right to vote or to stand for parliamentary elections.

Why is The Ethnic Vote Important?

There are several reasons why the ethnic vote is important. Firstly, ethnic minority communities are not randomly distributed throughout the country but tend to be found in 4 out of the 6 conurbations in the country. In Clydeside and Tyneside they constitute only some 0.6 per cent of the population. In the other 4 conurbations, they constitute between 6.4 per cent and 2 per cent of the total population. Their relative concentration in some conurbations compared to others means that, at least in physical terms, they are in a position to influence voting strength in those areas. Within these conurbations, they are even more relatively concentrated in some constituencies and local election wards vis a vis others and are, to this extent, in a position to make an impact on the overall voting turnout in those inner city constituencies and wards. Accordingly, the earlier election study showed that there were 76 constituencies in February, 1974 and 85 in October 1974, in which ehtnic minority voters could make a significant impact on the outcome of national elections. To the extent that these constituencies are marginal constituencies, the ethnic minority vote could influence the outcome of elections and did so in 1974.

Secondly, the level of political awareness among ethnic minorities has increased over the past decade partly because they recognise that their sense of

security in the country can be buttressed by such an awareness and partly because an increasing number of ethnic minority organisations are articulating many of the national issues such as race and immigration control which impinge on their sense of security. In this regard, they are responding to speeches and comments which are widely disseminated by the mass media particularly during an election campaign and are thus in a position to take such action individually or through the organisations to which they belong to guarantee their own future in this country.

Thirdly, the presence of National Front and other anti-immigrant candidates in elections has not only helped to increase their awareness of the issues in politics but has contributed towards an increasing degree of political mobilisation and, indeed, participation in elections in order to counter the anti-immigrant propaganda of that organisation. Of no less importance, was the response of the major political parties to the publication of the earlier election study mentioned above; these parties not only felt the need to take steps to involve ethnic minority communities in their activities but also openly sought their vote in various elections between 1974 and the General Election in 1979.

For all these reasons, the phenomenon of the ethnic minority voter participating in an election is no longer a 'flash in the pan' but is likely to become a permanent feature on the British politial landscape in future. It was therefore important that the Commission for Racial Equality, in pursuance of its duties under Section 43 (1) of the Race Relations Act 1976, should continue to keep the participation of ethnic minorities in elections under review.

The study reported in this volume was undertaken immediately prior to and after the General Election of May 3, 1979 and consisted of 5 separate surveys whose results have been collated to present a rounded picture of the dispositions of ethnic minority voters compared with their indigenous counterparts. These surveys were as follows:

1. **Registration Survey**
   This survey was designed to provide information on the extent to which members of ethnic minorities as well as the indigenous community registered themselves on the Electoral Register and were thus qualified to vote in the May 1979 election.

2. **Issues Survey**
   During the 'run-up' to the election, candidates from the various political parties presented their manifestos to the public at election meetings, in the form of leaflets as well as on the mass media in order to inform the electorate of their distinctive approach to various social, political and economic issues in the country as a whole. The purpose of this survey was to find out the knowledge and attitudes of members of the electorate and

in particular ethnic minorities towards these political and other issues. In addition, respondents were asked for their views on the way the major parties had handled these issues in the past, with specific reference to those issues which were most likely to affect the respondents' own lives.

3. **Voting patterns on Election Day**
   This survey was carried out on polling day and was aimed at identifying:
   (a) how ethnic minorities had actually voted and
   (b) the level of their turnout to vote compared with indigenous voters from the same constituencies.
   In conducting this survey, voters were contacted as they left the polling booths.

4. **Candidates Survey**
   The purpose of this survey was to establish the attitudes of candidates who were standing in the General Election to various political issues and, in particular, to race relations issues. This survey was conducted during the 3 weeks before the General Election.

5. **Anti-Immigrant Candidates**
   In addition, it was important to monitor the activities of anti-immigrant candidates during the election campaign and compare these with their actual performance at the General Election in order to provide a rounded picture of the dispositions of the ethnic minority voter. This did not involve a survey but was undertaken by means of a monitor of the election campaign and an analysis of returns from various areas throughout the country.

The first three surveys mentioned above were undertaken in 24 constituencies in inner-city areas. These constituencies were selected as follows:

1. Seven constituencies covered in October 1974 Study were 'revisited'.
2. Five constituencies with ethnic minority candidates contesting for the three major political parties were included.
3. Twelve constituencies were chosen at random from the rest of over 60 constituencies where the 'ethnic vote' could have influenced the result.

At the time of our surveys, seventeen of these constituencies were held by Labour, six by Conservatives and one by Liberals.

Although the above-mentioned criteria for selecting these constituencies were, to some degree, subjective, nevertheless, the regional spread of these constituencies suggest that they are broadly representative of areas where these criteria apply; however, some caution must be exercised in extrapolating from the results to other areas in the country.

Chapter Two: Election Issues

In order to obtain some measure of public interest in political issues, many of which formed crucial parts of party manifestos, respondents were asked to say how important or otherwise they considered a number of issues to be to them; they were asked to say whether they thought each issue was 'extremely important', 'quite important', 'not very important" or 'not at all important'. The responses were then scored in descending order such that, for example, if a respondent considered a statement to be 'extremely important' then a score of 4 was given; if 'quite important', a score of 3 was given and so on down to 1. Thus the higher the score the greater the importance attached to an issue. The following table presents the mean scores on each issue and the proportion of respondents who categorised these issues as being 'extremely' or 'quite important' to them.

TABLE 1: Important Election Issues

N = 1,138	*Mean Score*	*% Respondents expressing extremely or quite important*
(1) Keeping prices down	3.69	94
(2) Reducing unemployment	3.65	94
(3) Providing better education	3.58)	91
(4) Tighter controls to keep law and order	3.58)	87
(5) Improving the Health Service	3.56	91
(6) Lowering of taxation	3.44	86
(7) Improving race relations	3.40	82
(80) Protecting people's privacy	3.37	83
(9) Building more houses	3.34	82
(10) Getting a better deal for Britain in the Common Market	3.28)	69
(11) Controlling the Trade Unions power	3.28)	72
(12) Protecting freedom of speech	3.23	76
(13) Lowering mortgage rates	3.16	75
(14) Equal rights for women	2.94	65

The table shows that generally all the listed issues were thought to be either 'extremely' or 'quite' important by the majority of electors. In particular, unemployment, prices, education, law and order and the health service were seen as the most important issues. These findings are very much in line with the results of opinion polls conducted during the election campaign. On the other hand, issues concerning the Common Market, Trade Unions, freedom of speech, mortgage rates and equal rights for women were placed much lower down the list but were thought to be 'quite important'. Interestingly, 'improving race relations' is ranked in the middle in terms of its importance.

These results show, as was the case in 1974, that 'keeping prices down' and 'reducing unemployment' were seen as the two most important issues for respondents (see Table 2).

TABLE 2: Importance of Issues: Comparison between Two Surveys

	1974		*1979*	
	Mean Score	*691 % important*	*Mean Score*	*1138 % important*
Keeping prices down	3.80	96	3.69	94
Building more houses	3.66	94	3.34	82
Reducing unemployment	3.56	90	3.65	94
Protecting peoples privacy	3.53	87	3.37	83
Protecting freedom of speech	3.45	83	3.23	76
Improving race relations	3.13	72	3.40	82
Equal rights for women	3.09	71	2.94	65

Two other differences in attitudes of respondents are worth noting from the above Table: (i) greater emphasis was placed in 1974 on building more houses than 'improving race relations' and (ii) in 1979 the issue of 'improving race relations' was ranked higher than was the case in 1974[2].

Candidates standing for election were asked a similar question by means of self completed questionnaires (667 self-completed questionnaires). See Table 3.

It is clear from this Table that like the electors, candidates considered the issues of prices, taxation, unemployment, education and health service to be extremely important. But the candidates considered 'improving race relations' and 'equal rights for women' as being relatively less important. For instance, they placed 'improving race relations' thirteenth in rank out of the fourteen issues listed above, while electors placed it seventh in rank. How does this rank order differ among different ethnic groups?

TABLE 3: Importance of Election Issues – Candidates

	N = 667	*Mean Score*	*% respondents expressing extremely or quite important*
(i)	Keeping prices down	3.79	98
(ii)	Lowering of taxation	3.53	90
(iii)	Reducing unemployment	3.46	86
(iv)	Providing better education	3.40	91
(v)	Controlling the Trade Unions power	3.38	83
(vi)	Improving the Health Service	3.32	88
(vii)	Tighter controls to keep law and order	3.32	81
(viii)	Getting a better deal for Britain in the Common Market	3.10	75
(ix)	Building more houses	2.87	66
(x)	Lowering mortgage rates	2.82	67
(xi)	Protecting freedom of speech	2.77	57
(xii)	Protecting people's privacy	2.53	47
(xiii)	Improving race relations	2.37	42
(xiv)	Equal rights for women	2.21	35

All respondents involved in this survey rated the two issues of 'keeping prices down' and 'reducing unemployment' as being extremely important irrespective of their ethnic backgrounds. However, the ethnic background of respondents influenced their perception of other issues (see Table 4).

Education was felt to be of relatively greater importance by Afro-Caribbean respondents[3]. 'Improving race relations' was rated as the most important (No. 1) issue for both Afro-Caribbeans and Asians but was rated twelfth out of fourteen by white people. Closer inspection of the data showed that in the case of the white population and Afro-Caribbean respondents, those in the younger age groups (18 to 34 years) were more likely to see 'improving race relations' as an important issue than were older people. However, among the Asian population, the level of importance placed on this issue did *not* vary with age.

Apart from the issue of race relations, there were other areas in which there were differences of opinion between different ethnic groups e.g. the Common Market, and controlling the power of Trade Unions. These issues were relatively more important to the white population than to ethnic minorities. Indeed, it is interesting to note that there was a tendency for Afro-Caribbean respondents to attribute a higher level of importance *to every issue* compared to Asians (See Table 4).

TABLE 4: Mean Score Ratings of Issues by Different Ethnic Groups

	Total		*White*		*Afro-Caribbean*		*Asian*	
	Mean Score	*%*	*Mean Score*	*%*	*Mean Score*	*%*	*Mean Score*	*%*
(1) Keeping prices down	3.69	95	3.71 (1)	96	3.75 (2)	96	3.63 (2)	95
(2) Reducing unemployment	3.65	94	3.67 (2)	95	3.71 (4)	95	3.61 (3)	91
(3) Providing better education	3.58	91	3.53 (5)	92	3.74 (3)	98	3.59 (4)	90
(4) Tighter controls to keep law and order	3.58	87	3.63 (3)	91	3.60 (6)	90	3.49 (5)	82
(5) Improving the Health Service	3.56	91	3.60 (4)	92	3.64 (5)	93	3.48 (6)	90
(6) Lowering of taxation	3.44	86	3.41 (9)	87	3.53 (7)	89	3.44 (7)	83
(7) Improving race relations	3.40	82	3.15 (12)	74	3.75 (1)	93	3.65 (1)	91
(8) Protecting people's privacy	3.37	83	3.49 (6)	90	3.34 (9)	84	3.16 (10)	71
(9) Building more houses	3.34	82	3.36 (10)	85	3.50 (8)	88	3.26 (9)	76
(10) Getting a better deal for Britain in the Common Market	3.28	69	3.42 (8)	82	3.07 (12)	61	3.06 (11)	55
(11) Controlling the Trade Union's power	3.28	72	3.45 (7)	85	3.06 (13)	68	3.02 (13)	55
(12) Protecting freedom of speech	3.23	76	3.34 (11)	86	3.23 (11)	80	3.04 (12)	62
(13) Lowering mortgage rates	3.16	75	3.05 (13)	71	3.30 (10)	82	3.27 (8)	79
(14) Equal rights for women	2.94	65	2.97 (14)	69	3.05 (14)	64	2.87 (14)	61

*(Figures in brackets show ranking position).
Percentages show those people answering 'extremely or quite important' to each issue.

Political Parties and the Handling of Political Issues

Respondents were asked to state which party they thought was best at dealing with some of the issues mentioned above[4]. With the exception of 'law and order' and 'immigration', respondents generally considered that the Labour Party was best at dealing with each issue. On 'law and order' the difference of opinion in favour of the Conservatives was only 1 per cent, while for immigration it was 11 per cent.

Among the white population the Conservatives were thought to be better than Labour at dealing with immigration (29%), law and order (25%) the Trade Unions (4%) and Northern Ireland (2%). (See Figure 1 for details). On

TABLE 5: Party Thought to be the Most Sympathetic to Particular Groups?

	Total	*White*	*Afro-Car.*	*Asian*
	1138	*582*	*144*	*397*
	%	%	%	%
(1) *Women*				
Labour	36	29	44	43
Conservative	25	32	17	19
(2) *Unemployed*				
Labour	64	61	70	66
Conservative	14	19	9	8
(3) *Single Parent Families*				
Labour	52	51	65	50
Conservative	11	17	5	6
(4) *Old People*				
Labour	59	54	72	61
Conservative	17	26	8	8
(5) *West Indians*				
Labour	58	55	67	60
Conservative	7	10	3	3
(6) *Small Shopkeepers*				
Labour	28	20	31	38
Conservative	42	56	33	24
(7) *Asian*				
Labour	62	57	60	70
Conservative	8	11	2	6
(8) *Ethnic Groups in General*				
Labour	52	52	53	53
Conservative	8	11	6	6

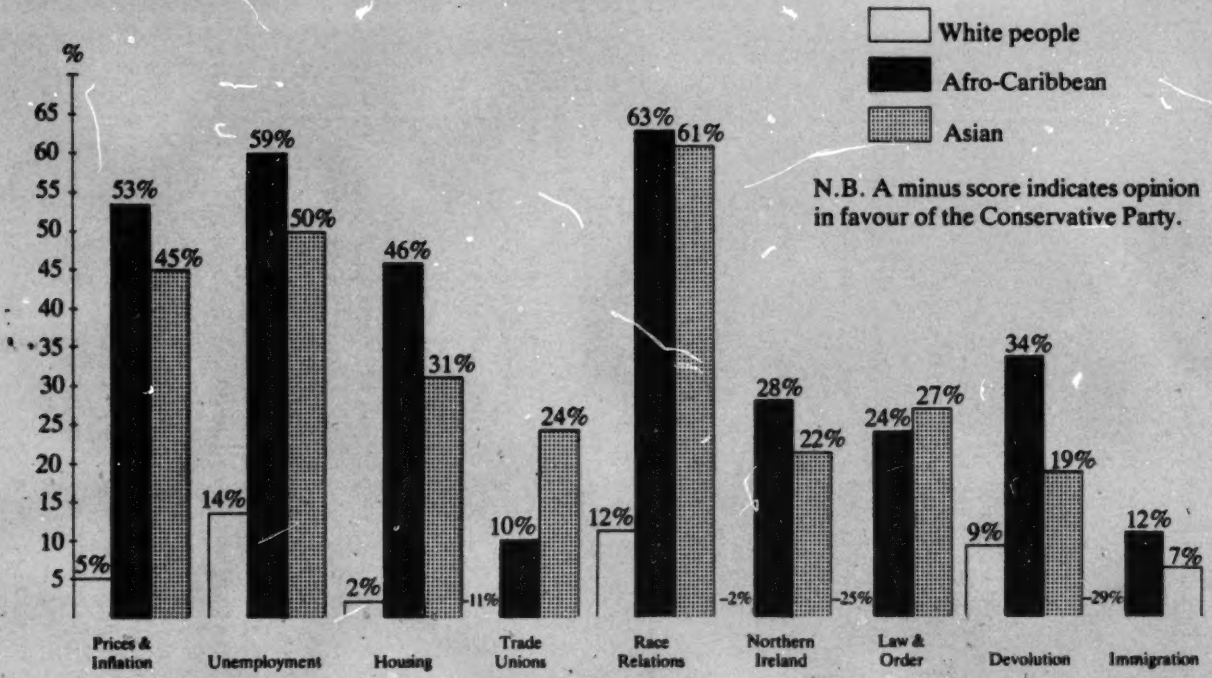
every issue, the Labour advantage was substantially greater among Afro-Caribbeans and Asians compared to the white electorate. Although (as the on-the-day survey shows) allegiance to the Labour Party is high among ethnic minorities, the Labour lead over the Conservatives on many issues is substantial. Figure 1 shows the Labour advantage in more detail. The minus figures show opinion in favour of the Conservatives.

When these findings are compared with those from the 1974 survey, they suggest that opinion on this matter has not changed in any significant way. In the 1974 survey (undertaken in 7 constituencies), as now, Labour was thought to be the party best capable of handling each one of these issues. The one major change of opinion concerns the issue of immigration. In 1974, 40 per cent of respondents saw Labour as the best party to deal with immigration and race relations compared with only 15 per cent who felt the Conservative Party was better. In 1979, this position was reversed with 38 per cent of respondents feeling that the Conservative Party is better able to deal with this issue as against 27 per cent who believed that the Labour Party was better. But, among ethnic minorities, the proportion who felt that the Labour Party is best at dealing with immigration and race relations remained high.

Similarly, ethnic minority respondents felt more certain about Labour's attitudes towards particular categories of people in society while white respondents, in the main, felt that the Conservatives were more sympathetic towards 'women' and 'small shop-keepers'. The following Table illustrates the pattern of responses.

It is worth mentioning here that a similar question was asked in the 1974 survey and, at that time, Labour was also thought to be most sympathetic towards most categories of people mentioned in the above Table.

Figure 1: Opinion on the Handling of Certain Issues by the Labour Government: Ethnic Groups



Chapter Three: Race Relations Issues

In the previous chapter, we showed that race relations as an election issue was rated seventh out of fourteen issues by respondents as a whole but that it was rated as the most important one by ethnic minorities. The reason for this has to do with the fact that it directly affects ethnic minorities more than the general electorate. In this chapter, we describe the reactions of candidates and electors to specific aspects of race relations as well as their opinions as to the political parties which are best able to deal with these issues.

Opinions of Candidates

We found that Labour and Liberal Party candidates attributed a similar degree of importance to race relations as an election issue (mean score 2.59, 49% for the Liberals and 2.57, 47% for Labour). Conservatives, on the other hand, were inclined to see this issue as being relatively less important (mean score 2.31, 43%). In addition, there was a noticeable difference of opinion between those Conservative candidates who were elected and those who were not. Those who were not elected were more likely to consider the issue to be more important (2.45, 45%) than those who were elected (2.18, 36%). As could be expected, National Front candidates considered the improvement of race relations to be 'not very important' (1.72, 19%).

In view of racial problems which had occurred in some areas and in particular the increased racial tension resulting from demonstrations and counter-demonstrations by National Front supporters and their opponents respectively which took place a few weeks before the election, it is surprising that greater importance was not placed on this issue (maximum possible score of 4). Weighed against this, is the fact that many of the candidates who participated in the survey were unlikely to be standing in constituencies with a high proportion of ethnic minorities; therefore, race relations was unlikely to be a major issue of concern to their voters. Nevertheless, it is worth stressing that those Conservatives who got elected and are now in Government tended to attribute lower degrees of importance to the issue of improving race relations than their colleagues who were not elected.

In order to ascertain candidates' opinions on specific issues concerning race relations, they were asked to indicate those issues which they considered to be particularly important at a *national level*. Their responses showed a general

concern with improving opportunities for ethnic minorities in education, employment and housing. In this regard, suggestions were made for improving educational facilities (e.g. the teaching of English and the introduction of special educational projects), enforcing equality of opportunity in employment and the withdrawal of the use of public facilities from racialist groups such as the National Front. More Labour candidates were in favour of denying public facilities to racialist groups (20%) than were either Liberal (6%) or Conservative (1%) candidates.

In order to probe further the views of candidates on issues which directly affect ethnic minority groups, they were asked for their opinion on the following:

—To make all West Indians, Asians and other minority groups living in the country return to their native country (i.e. compulsory repatriation).

—To draw up a register of West Indians, Asians and other minority groups who are eligible to come to this country.

—To ensure West Indians, Asians, and other minority groups in this country are treated the same as white people.

—To *encourage* West Indians, Asians and other minority groups including

TABLE 6: Candidates Reactions to Certain Issues

	Total 573 %	*Con* 219 %	*Lab* 107 %	*Lib* 216 %
To make ethnic minority groups return to their native countries				
Support	2	1	–	2
Oppose	95	92	100	97
To draw up a register				
Support	43	84	7	22
Oppose	43	6	79	61
To treat all people equally				
Support	95	92	98	99
Oppose	1	2	2	–
To encourage ethnic minority groups including children born in the UK to return to their native country				
Support	9	20	2	2
Oppose	76	54	97	88

children born in this country to return to their native country (i.e. voluntary repatriation).

Table 6 presents their attitudes to these issues in terms of party affiliation.

The results show that there was not much difference between candidates of the three political parties in supporting the principle of equality. There was virtually no support for a policy of compulsory repatriation. However, 20 per cent of Conservative candidates were in favour of voluntary repatriation (to *encourage* ethnic minority groups and their children born in UK to return to their native countries) compared to 2 per cent of Labour and Liberal candidates. A major difference emerged with regard to the drawing up of a register for dependants; the majority of Conservatives supported this proposal while the majority of both Labour and Liberal Party candidates were opposed to it.

Opinions About the Current Racial Situation

Candidates were also asked whether they felt that the relationship between ethnic minorities and the indigenous community was getting better, getting worse or remaining the same in (a) their own constituency and (b) in the country as a whole. (For details see Table 7).

TABLE 7: Current Racial Situation – Candidates

	Total	*Con*	*Lab*	*Lib*
	573	*219*	*107*	*216*
	%	%	%	%
(a) *Constituency level*				
Getting better	34	32	41	35
Remaining the same	49	44	46	52
Getting worse	4	5	4	3
Unsure	13	19	9	10
(b) *Country as a whole*				
Getting better	26	16	43	29
Remaining the same	35	40	31	34
Getting worse	19	20	14	19
Unsure	20	24	12	18

In each case, more candidates thought the racial situation had remained constant than thought it was either improving or deteriorating. Here, it should be remembered that many candidates were from areas which have probably never experienced racial problems, and consequently would have responded by saying that the situation has remained the same. Accordingly, relatively few

candidates from any party thought that the situation was deteriorating at constituency level. In the country as a whole, only 19 per cent considered that things are getting worse. At the same time, as might be expected, Labour candidates were more likely than other party candidates to think the situation was improving because they belonged to the party in power responsible for race relations policies. But generally, what did candidates think of existing race relations policies?

Opinions About Race Relations Policies

Candidates were asked for their views on present race relations policies and how they could be improved. Only 22 per cent felt that these policies were good or satisfactory; the majority (63%) felt that it was unsatisfactory for various reasons; 10 per cent felt that race relations policies are not strictly enforced and should be applied more rigorously and a further 10 per cent felt that laws are unlikely to be effective in the absence of changes in attitudes to ethnic minority groups. Labour and Liberal candidates were more likely to feel that these policies were good or satisfactory compared to Conservatices (36%, 31% and 18% respectively). Other responses were unspecific and, in any event, involved too few candidates for meaningful conclusions to be drawn. What improvements or changes in these policies did they envisage?

Against the background of the view by some politicians that a curb on immigration will improve race relations, it is interesting that only 4 per cent felt that a complete curb on immigration is likely to achieve such an improvement; a further 6 per cent felt that a policy of compulsory repatriation is likely to do so. The majority felt that it is the provision of better educational facilities for ethnic minority groups in this country which is likely to improve race relations. How do these views compare with those of the voters?

Voters' Knowledge and Attitudes

In order to explore the voters' knowledge of the policies of various political parties, we asked them to identify the political parties which supported the following proposals in their manifestos':

—Compulsory Repatriation
—Introduction of a register of dependants
—Equal treatment for ethnic minorities
—Voluntary repatriation

(Full statements were used as in Table 6 above)

The results were as follows:

(i) Compulsory repatriation

Three-quarters of the Afro-Caribbean and half of the Asian respondents associated this policy with the National Front Party. But a significant proportion (22%) of respondents also associated 'compulsory repatriation'

with the Conserative Party. Only 2 per cent associated this policy with the Labour Party. In this regard, there were a few differences between different ethnic groups, with 27 per cent of Afro-Caribbeans, 23 per cent of Asians and 21 per cent of white people associating this policy with the Conservative Party.

(ii) **The introduction of a register of dependants**

Over a third (36%) of the respondents associated the drawing up of an eligibility register with the Conservative Party. More ethnic minority respondents did so (Afro-Caribbeans 44%, Asians 38%) than white people (34%). Nevertheless, there were still many people who thought that this policy was part of the Labour Party's manifesto. Twenty-one per cent of white people and 17 per cent of both Afro-Caribbeans and Asians identified it with the Labour Party. In fact, as can be seen from the results of the candidates survey mentioned above, only 7 per cent of Labour candidates supported this proposal compared with 84 per cent of Conservative and 22 per cent of Liberal candidates.

(iii) **Equal treatment for ethnic minorities**

The majority (62%) of respondents saw Labour as the party advocating equal treatment for ethnic minorities in this country. This was even higher — more than two-thirds — among the ethnic minority population. Only 18 per cent considered this to be Conservative Party policy and even fewer (9%) considered it to be a Liberal one.

(iv) **Voluntary repatriation**

Over a third of the respondents (35%) identified voluntary repatriation with the National Front although over a quarter (27%) believed that it was also a Conservative Party policy. There was little difference of opinion between people of different ethnic groups.

Only 4 per cent of respondents thought the Labour Party were in favour of this and 1 per cent believed that it was also a Liberal Party policy. This corresponds with the Candidates survey results mentioned above which showed that 20 per cent of Conservative candidates favour voluntary repatriation and only 2 per cent of Labour candidates.

Respondents were then asked to indicate the political party which they felt was most capable of providing:

—Equal employment opportunities for ethnic minority groups
—Better housing conditions for these groups
—Better educational facilities to deal with their specific needs
—Equal treatment generally for ethnic minority groups

As the following table shows, in each instance the Labour Party was rated better than the Conservative Party among all groups of respondents.

A similar Labour advantage was found in the 1974 survey. Labour was seen then to be most sympathetic to these particular problems by respondents from

TABLE 8: Party Most Sympathetic to These Problems

	Total	*White*	*Afro-Car*	*Asian*
	1138	*582*	*144*	*397*
	%	*%*	*%*	*%*
(1) *Equal employment opportunities*				
Labour	59	53	67	65
Conservative	7	10	2	5
(2) *Better housing conditions*				
Labour	56	53	63	60
Conservative	26	26	27	26
(3) *Better educational facilities*				
Labour	57	52	63	62
Conservative	9	12	4	7
(4) *Equal treatment generally*				
Labour	60	55	69	65
Conservative	24	25	20	23

Totals do not add up to 100 per cent because some respondents mentioned other parties while others were 'undecided' and did not express their opinions.

all ethnic backgrounds.

In order to explore the reasons for this advantage in 1974 and 1979 we asked respondents to outline some action which the Labour Party had taken which was of direct benefit to ethnic minority groups.

A third of the respondents could not think of anything which the Labour Government had done to benefit minority groups and 13 per cent were certain that they had done nothing. Other respondents replied as follows:

'Passed the Race Relations Act of 1976' (17%)
'Allowed dependants to enter the country' (16%)
'Allowed fiances to marry Asian girls here' (16%)
'United families (11%)

Slightly more Afro-Caribbeans (19%) mentioned the passing of the Race Relations Act 1976 than did Asians (15%); understandably, Asians were more concerned with allowing dependants and fiances to enter the country than Afro-Caribbeans.

These responses point to a greater level of awareness among respondents about action taken by Government in the field of immigration and race relations when compared with the 1974 results. In 1974 many more respondents (70%) were unable to think of anything which the Labour Government had done which had been of direct benefit to ethnic minorities.

The only major issue raised was that of the amnesty which was granted to illegal immigrants shortly before the 1974 survey was undertaken. Twelve per cent of respondents mentioned this in 1974 compared with 6 per cent in 1979.

Voters' Opinions on the Current Racial Situation

As with candidates, we also asked voters whether they felt that the relationship between white people and ethnic minority groups was getting better, getting worse or remaining the same in (a) their own constituency area and (b) in the country as a whole. The responses to this question were very interesting. More ethnic minority respondents felt that the situation was improving at both local and national levels than did white people. (See Table 9 for details).

TABLE 9: Opinions on Feelings Between White People and Ethnic Minority Groups

	Total	*White*	*Afro-Car*	*Asian*
	1138	*582*	*144*	*397*
	%	*%*	*%*	*%*
Local				
Getting better	32	29	40	35
Remaining the same	47	48	38	49
Getting worse	14	18	13	10
Unsure	6	5	8	6
National				
Getting better	23	18	36	25
Remaining the same	30	31	23	29
Getting worse	32	37	29	27
Unsure	15	13	12	19

The above table shows that, at constituency level, only 14 per cent of respondents thought that the situation is getting worse. Forty-seven per cent thought that it has not changed while 32 per cent thought that it is improving. Afro-Caribbean respondents were most optimistic with 40 per cent seeing the situation as improving. Thirty-five per cent of Asians were also of this opinion while fewer white people (29%) were.

The situation was not viewed at the national level in the same way. More than 32 per cent saw the situation in the country as a whole as one which was deteriorating; this was twice as many as those who felt that the situation in their own area was deteriorating. Again, white people were least optimistic with 37 per cent seeing the situation as getting worse compared with 29 per cent of Afro-Caribbeans and 27 per cent of Asians. Only 18 per cent of white people

thought the situation in the country as a whole has improved while, once again, Afro-Caribbean respondents were most likely to think that things have improved (36%)[5]. How do these results compare with the views of candidates?

A comparison of the views of candidates and voters show that whereas only 4 per cent of candidates felt that the situation between whites and ethnic minorities is getting worse at the local level, 14 per cent of voters felt the same way. Similarly, whereas 19 per cent of candidates felt that the situation in the country as a whole was deteriorating, 32 per cent of the voters felt the same way. The candidates were clearly therefore more optimistic about the relationship between the indigenous population and ethnic minorities than were the voters, although we also found that they were more likely than the voters (13% as against 6%) to be unaware of the state of feeling between these groups in their local situations. In effect then, the optimism of candidates reflects, if anything, their greater degree of idealism about race relations compared to voters.

Voters' Opinions of Race Relations Policies

Like candidates, voters were also asked for their opinions of Government's race relations policies prior to the 1979 General Election.

In response, one in three voters thought that race relations policies were adequate (29%) although some (10%) thought they could be better. Nine per cent generally disapproved, while fewer respondents pointed out specific advantages. Criticisms were made that they were too lenient (3%), that they had failed to stop discrimination in employment (2%) and that they were impossible to enforce (2%).

Some white people (8%) and in particular those voting Conservatives (22%) said that race relations policies gave minority groups too many advantages. Apart from this, there was little difference in the responses by different ethnic groups. It is also interesting to look at some of the verbatim responses received in response to this question. One respondent commented, "I think it (race relations policy) is bad. The parties play politics with it. I don't want ethnic people to be treated different — just the same as everyone else" (Afro-Caribbean man aged between 20 and 24). Another respondent had a different view, "I work with white people and once they know you are friendly, they are friendly. It's people that count, not Governments. I don't think they can do anything to make things better. I'm going home when I can" (Afro-Caribbean woman aged between 35 and 44 years). A young Asian reacted strongly to current race relations policies by saying, "It's a white-wash. It's just on paper. In practice it's a failure" (Asian man aged between 25 and 29 years). Another added, "I feel that there are double standards about this. Despite the Race Relations Act, there is still ill feeling between white and non-white people" (Asian man aged between 30 and 34 years). One respondent thought that race

relations policies were ineffective: "I don't think it is effective because it needs to have more power to act. I think it can be a barrier to people making contact and being open. It can make people afraid to speak their minds" (Asian woman aged between 20 and 24 years). Another reacted by saying "They (race relations policies) merely indicate the right direction but don't provide a proper basis for carrying them out. More safeguards should be provided for police relations with minority groups" (A white woman aged between 35 and 44 years).

Some of the difficulties in race relations were identified by respondents. One said, "I think institutions like the community relations councils have some effect but quite often cannot achieve what they want to achieve because they are under pressure from local authorities. They also don't have enough contact at grass roots level" (a white woman aged between 20 and 24 years). Another said, "They (race relations policies) aim to be fair but you cannot change people's basic attitudes" (a white man aged 65 plus). At the same time, one respondent doubted whether race relations policies were appropriate because they "create too great an awareness of racialism and can prevent integration" (a white woman aged between 30 and 34 years).

In sum, we found that while respondents were able to correctly identify certain policies with the political parties which supported them, nevertheless, some respondents 'misidentified' these policies. For instance, one in four respondents identified compulsory repatriation with the Conservative Party while others identified the setting up of a register of dependants with the Labour Party. Similarly, the Labour Party was thought by some to encourage equality between different racial groups although this is also outlined in the Conservative and Liberal parties' manifestos.

At the same time, voters were more likely than candidates to think that feelings between whites and ethnic minorities were getting worse in the country as a whole. Generally speaking respondents were satisfied with Labour's race relations policies. Further, the Labour Party was thought to be sympathetic to various problems especially those relating to ethnic minorities. It was against this background that we examined the voting behaviour of whites and ethnic minorities from the same areas.

In situations where a Government's majority is small as was the case with the Labour Government between 1974 and 1979, all minorities with a right to vote take on tremendous political significance. This is just as true of the Welsh and Scots as it is of ethnic minority groups from the New Commonwealth. Several people commented on this during the run-up to the General Election in 1979. One correspondent wrote "the ethnic vote, as it is called in this election, is being courted more assiduously at constituency level than ever before by all parties"; she went on to identify the crucial determinants of the ethnic vote as being "whether Mrs Thatcher's 'swamping' remark will be counter-balanced by Tory praise for the Asian family and the West Indians' work record"[6] and concluded that "it is obvious that the ethnic vote whatever happens . . . is for the first time considered to be a real force in a British General Election"[7]. Other observers commented on the specific role which ethnic minorities from the New Commonwealth could play in marginal constituencies identified in the 1974 study to which we have referred earlier[8]. For instance, one commentator wrote that "one of the largest coloured immigrant communities in the country will decide the fate of Leicester South, Labour's most marginal seat in the East Midlands where a swing of only 1.5 per cent is needed by the Conservatives; . . . the constituency's 11,500 coloured voters who make up 17.5 per cent of the total electorate hold the effective balance of power"[9]. This situation is not surprising since, as we indicated earlier, ethnic minority groups are not randomly distributed throughout the country but are found predominantly in inner city areas; marginal constituencies within these areas are therefore likely to contain sizable proportions of ethnic minority voters[10]. In 1974, there were 59 such marginal constituencies, over half of which were in the Greater London area; the rest were found in the five conurbations[11]. At the February and October elections of 1974, the Conservative Party won 16 of these marginal constituencies while the Labour Party won 30 of them. The remaining 13 marginal constituencies were won by the Conservative Party in the February elections of that year but were then lost to the Labour Party in the October elections. Since the total number of seats captured from the Conservative Party by Labour was only 17 between those two elections, it was evident that these 13 seats (and the ethnic minority voters in those constituencies) influenced the outcome of the two elections.

In view of this, we were especially concerned to establish how ethnic minority voters in these constituencies voted during the 1979 General Election. Did they influence the outcome of this election in the same way that they influenced the outcome of the two elections in 1974?[12] Did they 'swing' their votes in the direction of either one of the three major parties? Whether they could have had any influence at all depends on several factors such as whether they were registered on the Electoral Register and whether they were members of one or other political parties, among others.

Registration of Ethnic Minority Voters

As we indicated in the first chapter, the aim of the Registration Survey was to establish the extent to which voters registered themselves to vote on the Electoral Register and to determine whether ethnic minority people were as likely to register themselves to vote as were white people. Registration on the Electoral Register is a fundamental prerequisite for participation in local and general elections in Britain.

However, it is widely acknowledged that even where eligible voters are registered, the Electoral Register tends to provide an incomplete measure of all those who are eligible because it tends to be published some four months after it is compiled and is invariably sixteen months out of date when it is replaced. Thus, as Leonard put it, " . . . at all times, large numbers of dead people are on the register while people who have moved are not registered in respect of their current addresses"[13]. Not surprisingly, therefore, one study of the level of accuracy of the Electoral Register found that it is, at any one time, no more than 94 per cent accurate as a record of all those who are eligible to vote. Thereafter, it tends to become inaccurate at a rate of a half per cent per month due to removals, right up to the last month before it is replaced, when its accuracy drops to 87 per cent[14].

Nevertheless, and these problems apart, ethnic minority groups experience difficulties in registering as electors. Some have language difficulties; others may not be familiar with their rights; still others probably feel their stay in Britain is a temporary one and do not therefore feel impelled to involve themselves in the political process. For instance, one study in 1964 showed that fewer than half of all Commonwealth immigrants were registered[15]. However, the proportion of ethnic minorities on the register increased in 1966. Nevertheless, a sample survey of 227 Asians and Afro-Caribbeans and 175 whites in 1974 showed that ethnic minorities were 5 times as likely not to have registered to vote as were whites in the same area[16]. Only 6 per cent of the whites were not registered compared with almost a quarter (24%) of ethnic minorities. The incidence of 'movers in' was also higher among ethnic minorities (19%) compared with whites (14%). When those who had recently moved and new voters (18 year old) were excluded, it was found that only 6 per

cent of whites compared with 27 per cent of Asians and 37 per cent of Afro-Caribbean people were not registered.

This high level of non-registration was alarming and several organisations — the then Community Relations Commission, community relations councils, political parties and some ethnic minority organisations — tried to encourage ethnic minority people to register as voters. In 1976 checks in two areas, where 1974 fieldwork was done, showed a great improvement in the level of registration of ethnic minorities. For example, in Birmingham, it was found that 5 per cent of Asians and 13 per cent of West Indians were not on the register as compared with 4 per cent of whites. In Bradford, 9 per cent of Asians were not registered as aginst 5 per cent of whites from the same area[17]. This improvement was partly due to a special campaign launched by the Bradford City Council in 1976 to encourage ethnic minorities and others to register. However, the results from Bradford and Birmingham could not be generalised over the whole nation.

In 1979, we undertook a survey of 24 constituencies spread throughout the country (for a detailed list see Appendix 1). Fieldwork for this survey was conducted in the 3 weeks following the May General Election. The criterion for selecting respondents was as follows: if a person had lived at an address for 8 months or less and was not on the register, he was classified as a 'Recent Mover'. If he was just 18 and not on the register he was classified as a 'New Voter'; persons who could not be traced in the register were classified as 'Not Registered'. Information was collected from a total of 823 households containing 1,927 people. Of these, 1,115 were White, 152 Afro-Caribbean, 595 Asian and 65 were other ethnic groups (e.g. Chinese, Cypriots and Malaysian).

The results showed that 22 per cent of non-white respondents were not on the Electoral Register compared with 7 per cent of white respondents. Within the

TABLE 10: Registration By Ethnic Background

	White (1115)		*Afro-Caribbean (152)*		*Asian (595)*		**Others (65)*		*Total Non-White (812)*	
	No.	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*
Registered	964	86	118	78	438	74	43	66	599	74
Not Registered	77	7	27	18	132	22	16	25	175	22
New Voters										
Recent Movers	74	7	7	4	25	4	6	9	38	4

*Others include Chinese, Malaysians, Cypriots and other ethnic minority groups from the new Commonwealth with a right to vote.

ethnic minority group, Chinese and Cypriots were slightly less likely to be registered and Afro-Caribbean respondents were more likely to be registered as Table 10 shows.

If we exclude those who were classified as 'New Voters' and 'Recent Movers' we find that 23 per cent of ethnic minority respondents were not registered, whereas for white respondents the percentage of those not on the Electoral Register remains 7 per cent (see Table 11 below). In other words, the lower tendency to register among ethnic minority groups is not accounted for by a preponderance of 'New Voters' and 'Recent Movers'.

TABLE 11: Registration By Race (excluding new voters and recent movers)

	White (1041)		*Afro-Caribbean (145)*		*Asian (570)*		*Others (59)*		*Total Non-White (774)*	
	No.	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*
Registered	964	93	118	81	438	77	43	73	599	77
Not Registered	77	7	27	19	132	23	16	27	175	23

It is interesting to compare these findings with those from the earlier Registration Survey (carried out in 1974). This comparison shows that the level of registration among all ethnic groups improved slightly (7%) but some ethnic groups improved more than others. For instance, the level of registration among West Indians rose by 18 per cent (from 63% in 1974 to 81% in 1979) while among Asians it increased only marginally from 73 per cent in 1974 to 77 per cent. Among the white population it remained virtually constant (94% in 1974 and 93% in 1979).

It is also interesting to examine the pattern of non-registration in different areas of the country. Our results show wide variation from area to area among ethnic groups. Part of such variation is undoubtedly linked with the policies of local electoral registration offices and with the interest taken by political parties or voluntary groups in persuading various groups to participate in the political process. We found that areas with high levels of non-registration among ethnic minorities included the constituencies of Glasgow Central, Leicester South, Ealing Acton, Bradford West, Coventry North-East, Birmingham Sparkbrook and Wandsworth-Battersea South. Almost 100 per cent registration was recorded in Manchester Ardwick, Preston North and Wolverhampton South-West. However, data relating to individual constituencies should be regarded merely as indications since base figures in some of them are small.

Turnout for the General Election 1979

Analysing the rates of turn-out by different ethnic groups is complicated by the fact that West Indian names are not easily identifiable from the Electoral Register. A name such as 'Johnson' could relate to a West Indian, a white voter or, indeed, an Asian. One way round this complication is to compare those Asian names which are identifiable from the Register with those of non-Asians (even though there is a margin of error in misidentifying a name and the ethnic group to which the person of that name belongs) and comparing the results with the outcome of visible identification at polling booths as voters come out.

This method of approach has been used in Bradford for many years and Dr Le Lohe of Bradford University found that since 1969, the Asian level of turn-out has been consistently higher than that of all non-Asian groups[18]. Using this method, researchers also found that the level of turn-out among Asians in Rochdale and Bradford during the October Elections of 1974 was also higher than that for all non-Asians (including indigenous voters)[19].

A further method of assessing turn-out rates is to select a sample of all voters on the Electoral Register and ask them to recall whether they voted at any particular elections; the results can then be compared with the turn-out figure usually recorded by polling clerks. Using this composite approach, a survey of 2,141 male voters in the central constituency of Nottingham were asked if they could recall voting in the General Election of 1966; 69 per cent remembered that they *actually* voted which is similar to the actual turn-out rate (recorded by polling clerks) of 67.7 per cent. Although few ethnic group members were included in that survey, nevertheless, 87.9 per cent of Asians, 70.8 per cent of West Indians and 68.3 per cent of white voters claimed to have voted.

The trend towards increasing levels of turn-out among ethnic minority voters has continued since then; a recent survey of voters in a Lambeth Central local By-Election in March, 1979 showed that West Indian turn-out was higher than that of white voters. However, this was a local election as distinct from a national election.

In the General Election 1979, our interviewers recorded turn-out rates at certain polling stations in 19 constituencies by counting the number of Asians and non-Asian voters who left the polling booths after casting their votes and comparing the result with the relevant entries in the Electoral Register. The results are presented in Table 12.

As this Table makes clear, the Asian turn-out was higher in eighteen of the nineteen constituencies listed compared to that of non-Asian voters.

In order to see whether this applies in polling stations within constituencies, we analysed turn-out in 8 selected polling stations in the 3 constituencies of Bradford West, Burnley and Rochdale; once again, we found that the level of turn-out among Asian voters was higher than that of non-Asian voters as Table 13 illustrates.

TABLE 12: Turnout in Selected Constituencies: Asians vs. Non-Asians – 1979 Election

	Asians			*Others*			*Totals*		
Constituency	*Electors*	*Voters*	*%*	*Electors*	*Voters*	*%*	*Electors*	*Voters*	*%*
1. Wandsworth/Battersea	214	147	69	1316	708	54	1530	855	56
2. Manchester Ardwick	166	148	89	1127	673	60	1293	821	64
3. Wolverhampton South West	223	181	81	939	589	63	1162	770	67
4. Birmingham Sparkbrook	614	503	82	924	500	55	1538	1003	66
5. Bradford West	517	362	70	523	237	46	1040	599	58
6. City of London and Westminster South	25	19	76	1256	727	58	1281	746	59
7. Preston North	459	352	77	1196	779	66	1655	1131	69
8. Nuneaton	247	233	95	933	615	66	1180	848	72
9. Sheffield Heeley	19	9	48	776	460	60	795	469	59
10. Newcastle North	345	278	81	2188	1302	60	2533	1580	63
11. Southampton Itchen	590	479	82	2074	1201	58	2664	1680	63
12. Bristol North East	192	160	84	1584	1064	68	1776	1224	69
13. Walsall South	458	383	84	517	317	62	975	700	72
14. Brent East	153	145	95	1671	1092	66	1824	1237	68
15. Leicester South	820	743	91	1191	718	61	2011	1461	73
16. Rochdale	958	693	73	1570	1009	65	2528	1702	68
17. Glasgow Central	57	43	76	789	410	52	846	453	54
18. Hackney North & Stoke Newington	70	50	72	790	550	70	860	600	70
19. Haringey Hornsey	68	52	77	1232	854	70	1300	906	70

TABLE 13: Asian and Non-Asian Turnout in the 1979 General Election in Bradford West, Burnley and Rochdale

Polling Station	*Asian Electors*	*Other Electors*	*Asian Proportion %*	*Asian Voters*	*Asian Turnout %*	*Other Voters*	*Other Turnout %*
Bradford Drummond	773	398	66.0	531	68.9	206	51.8
Bradford Grange	1692	1894	47.2	1333	78.8	998	52.7
Bradford St Andrews	332	253	56.7	185	55.7	162	64.0
Bradford Southbrook	1093	2006	35.3	821	75.1	905	45.1
Bradford (4) Av Totals	3890	4551	46.1	2870	73.8	2271	49.9
Burnley Stoneyholme	472	1038	31.2	355	75.2	729	70.2
Rochdale West St	326	285	53.4	199	61.0	187	65.6
Rochdale Silver St	137	1135	10.8	112	81.8	735	64.8
Rochdale Shepherd	581	477	54.9	415*	71.4	308*	64.6
Total/Av (8) above	5406	7486	42.0	3951	73.1	4230	56.5

In order to explore further this tendency for Asians to turn-out for elections more than non-Asians, we monitored turn-out rates of voters for the election to the European Parliament in June, 1979. This provides some measure of the stability of this tendency over different kinds of elections to which the electorate attributed different levels of importance (certainly most electors did not take the European Election as seriously as they took the General Election in May, 1979). The results of this exercise showed that Asian turn-out was again higher than that of non-Asians as Table 14 illustrates.

TABLE 14: European Assembly Election June 8, 1979 – Turnout: Asians vs. Non-Asians

Polling Station	*Asian Voters*	*Asian Turnout %*	*Other Voters*	*Other Turnout %*
Bradford Drummond	316	40.9	93	23.4
Bradford Grange	751	44.4	393	20.7
Bradford Southbrook	305	27.9	368	18.3
Burnley Stonyholme	179	37.9	282	27.2
Total/Av (4) above	1551	38.5	1136	21.3

It is, indeed, significant that while the general turn-out rate among all electors for the European Election in June, 1979 was lower than their turn-out rate for the General Election a month earlier, nevertheless the turn-out rate for Asians was not only higher than that of their non-Asian neighbours who voted

at the same polling stations, but was also higher than the national turn-out rate of 32.1 per cent. In the General Election a month earlier, they achieved a turn-out rate of 73.1 per cent which was over one and a quarter times the rate of their white neighbours who voted at the same polling stations. Their turn-out rate of 38.5 per cent during the European Elections of June, 1979 was almost twice that of their white neighbours who voted at the same polling stations, and this rate was achieved at an election which the general electorate did not consider to be as important as the General Election.

Membership of Political Parties and Trade Unions by Ethnic Minority Voters

Over the whole sample of 1,138 respondents, only 28 per cent belong to any organisation. When this figure was broken down into ethnic groups, it was found that 34 per cent of Afro-Caribbean respondents belong to some organisation, 24 per cent among Asians and 29 per cent among white voters. The majority of those who claim to belong to some organisation belong to a trade union. This level of participation in organisations is very similar to that which was found in the 1974 survey to which we referred earlier[20].

But not only were the majority of our respondents unlikely to belong to a British political party, we also found that they were just as unlikely to have ever attended a party political meeting. Only 17 per cent of our total sample of respondents had ever attended party political meetings and of these, Asians are the least likely to have done so (7%) and West Indians less likely (10%); this situation is more favourable with white voters (26%). We also found that it was those who were older than 35 years of age among the white population who were more likely to have attended such meetings while among West Indians it was primarily those who were under 35 years of age.

Expressed Voting Intentions

As part of our study of the participation of ethnic minority voters in the electoral process, we explored their voting intentions in advance of polling day.

The majority of our respondents intended to vote for the Labour Party (52%), for Conservatives 23 per cent, while only 6 per cent expressed an intention to vote for the Liberal Party at the General Election[21] as Table 15 below shows.

Further analysis of the expressed intentions of voters showed that it was primarily those aged 55 and over among all ethnic groups who expressed an intention to vote for the Conservative Party.

Having established party loyalties, we then went on to look at respondents' reasons for supporting a particular party. Let us look firstly at respondents' reasons for supporting the Labour Party.

Given that just over one in two respondents intended to vote for the Labour Party, it was important to establish the reasons why they held this preference.

TABLE 15: Voting Intentions By Race

	Total	*White*	*Afro-Caribbean*	*Asian*
	1138	*582*	*144*	*397*
	%	%	%	%
Labour	52	39	66	65
Conservative	23	37	6	9
Liberal	6	8	8	3

Our analysis of the main reasons were as follows:

—'They are for the working class' (28%)
—'Generally like them/think they are better' (16%)
—'Always voted Labour' (13%)
—'Labour has achieved a lot/should let them continue' (13%)
—'They are sympathetic towards immigrants/will solve problems of immigration' (9%)
—'They are helpful/good for ethnic minorities' (5%)

All other reasons were mentioned by fewer than 5 per cent of respondnts.

There were few differences between various groups in their responses with the notable exception of those referring to the Labour Party's 'sympathy' for problems associated with immigrants. Here 12 per cent of Afro-Caribbean voters and 15 per cent of Asian voters expressed this view while no white voter did.

A similar analysis of the 23 per cent of all respondents who intended to vote for the Conservative Party resulted in the following main reasons:

—'Generally like/think the Conservatives are better' (26%)
—'Labour has been in power too long/long enough' (12%)
—'Conservatives want a cut in taxes' (8%)
—'Comments pro Mrs Thatcher' (7%)

However, an expressed intention to vote for a particular party is only a very general indication of the orientation of voters. How likely is it that such expressed intentions will be translated into action? In order to explore this, we asked our respondents to indicate the likelihood of their actually voting for the candidates put up by the party of their choice in the General Election. Eighty two per cent of those who had expressed an intention to vote for the Labour Party thought it 'extremely' or 'very likely' that they would actually vote for the Labour Party on the day. And among these, white voters and those who are older than 35 years of age (holding ethnic group constant) were 'extremely' or 'very likely' to actually vote for their Labour candidate. There were too few Conservative Party supporters (in terms of expressed intentions) to enable a similar analysis to be undertaken. Two-thirds of ethnic minority respondents

who did not actually intent to turn out to vote for their Labour candidates expressed no reasons for not doing so while white voters not intending to do the same thing expressed various reasons for their views (such as the Labour Party's poor record with the Unions, 22%; their past record generally, 20%; and their apparently too left wing attitude, 10%). These findings are similar to the findings from the 1974 survey in so far as 79 per cent of those who intended to vote for the Labour Party thought it 'extremely' or 'very likely' that they would actually turn out to vote for their Labour candidate.

A further dimension of voting intentions can be gleaned from a comparison of the political parties for which respondents voted in 1974 and their voting intentions in the 1979 General Election. This comparison is presented in Table 16.

TABLE 16: Party Voted for in 1974 Election analysed by Current Voting Intention

Base: All those voting in October 1974	*Intend to vote for Labour 1979*			*Intend to vote for Conservative 1979*		
	White	*Afro-Car*	*Asian*	*White*	*Afro-Car*	*Asian*
Voted for in 1974 election	*175*	*40*	*158*	*165*	*7*	*22*
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Labour	92	98	96	23	43	59
Conservative	4	3	2	72	57	36
Liberal	2	–	1	2	–	5
Other party	2	–	1	3	–	–
Refused	1	–	–	1	–	–

This shows that party loyalties have not changed in any significant way (i.e. those who claimed to have voted for one party in 1974 now intended to vote for the same party again); voting intentions which were expressed by respondents were likely to result in voting behaviour in line with those intentions. Nevertheless (and in spite of the small number of Afro-Caribbeans and Asians who intended to vote for the Conservative Party in 1979), cross-party allegiances are interesting indications of 'swings'; 23 per cent of white people who voted for the Labour Party in 1974 now intended to vote for the Conservative Party; the direction of 'swing' among Afro-Caribbeans and Asians was the same and reflects the outcome of the 1979 Election. However, the numbers intending to vote Conservatives were small. This also confirms the conclusion arrived at earlier that ethnic minority voters do form part of the population of 'floating voters'. But if voting intentions were as clear as this analysis suggests, were voters equally aware of the candidates put up by the

various parties for the General Election? In order to examine this, we asked respondents to identify the candidates standing for election in their constituencies.

Our results showed that one in two respondents were unaware of the names of any of the candidates in their constituency. Of those who could identify at least one candidate, 46 per cent were white, 35 per cent were Afro-Caribbeans and 31 per cent were Asians. Generally, Labour candidates were more likely to be correctly identified than candidates of other parties. Among the white respondents, 61 per cent correctly identified their Labour candidate both by name and by their party. Among Afro-Caribbeans and Asians this figure was even higher (70% and 64% respectively).

Correct identification of Conservative candidates was much lower; only 24 per cent of both the Asian and white respondents respectively identified their Conservative candidate whilst this figure was even lower among Afro-Caribbeans (10%). Identification of candidates of other parties was also low. Only 16 per cent of white people and 4 per cent of Asians correctly identified a Liberal candidate.

Votes Cast in the General Election 1979

In the 24 constituencies studied, a sample of voters in the same polling district as was used in the 'registration' and 'issues' surveys, were asked to record (on 'duplicate' ballot papers) the way they voted in the polling stations. The ballot papers used were similar to those used in the real election, except that they were marked by the interviewer to record each voter's ethnic group. The ballot paper was placed in a box by the voter as he or she left the polling booth. This method is similar to that used by the Opinion Research Centre to measure voting patterns on polling day for television companies.

TABLE 17: Voting Patterns by Ethnic Group

	Total		*White*		*Asian*		*Afro-Car.*		*Other*	
	3225		*2020*		*871*		*285*		*49*	
	No.	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*
Voting:										
Conservative	883	27	793	39	66	8	14	5	10	20
Labour	2048	64	1008	50	750	86	255	90	35	71
Liberal	219	7	161	9	46	5	9	3	3	6
Other parties	75	2	58	2	9	1	7	2	1	2
Labour lead over Conservative	37%		11%		78%		85%		51%	

Out of a total sample of 3,225 voters involved in this exercise, 1,205 were from ethnic minority groups. The results show that the majority of ethnic minority voters actually voted for the Labour Party as against other parties. While 50 per cent of whites voted Labour, 90 per cent of Afro-Caribbeans and 86 per cent of Asians in the sample voted Labour. Table 17 presents the details.

It is clear from the Table that among whites in the sample, Labour had an 11 per cent lead over the Conservatives compared with a 78 per cent lead among Asians and 85 per cent among Afro-Caribbeans. This trend of support for the Labour Party was similar to that found in 1974. In this regard, while support among whites had decreased marginally from 56 per cent in 1974 to 50 per cent in 1979, it increased by a similar amount among Asians (from 78% in 1974 to 86% in 1979). Support for Labour among Afro-Caribbeans remained roughly the same (89% in 1974 and 90% in 1979). As a group, 86 per cent of ethnic minorities voted Labour, 8 per cent voted Conservatives, and 5 per cent voted Liberals as Table 18 shows.

TABLE 18: Voting Patterns: White and Ethnic Minorities

	Total 3225		*White 2020*		*Ethnic Minorities 1205*	
	No.	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*
Voting:						
Conservative	883	27	793	39	90	8
Labour	2048	64	1008	50	1040	86
Liberal	219	7	161	9	58	5
Other parties	75	2	58	2	17	1
Labour lead	37%		11%		78%	

In each of the constituencies covered in our survey, more people voted for the Labour Party than voted for the Conservative Party but the level of support for the former varied over different areas. Only in the constituencies of Wolverhampton South West and Croydon North East did the Conservatives achieve as high a following as the Labour Party did. In Wolverhampton South West, 46 per cent of respondents voted for the Labour Party and 43 per cent voted for the Conservative Party while in Croydon North East, 44 per cent voted for the Labour Party and 43 per cent for the Conservative Party. In the other constituencies, the Labour lead was considerable. For example, in Walsall South, only 17 per cent of respondents voted for the Conservative Party whereas as many as 79 per cent voted for the Labour Party.

We can examine this pattern of support by comparing their voting patterns in

the seven constituencies studied in the 1974 survey with their voting patterns in the General Election of 1979 in those same constituencies as in Table 19.

TABLE 19: Voting Patterns by Constituency – Comparison of 1974 & 1979 Surveys

	Conservative		*Labour*		*Liberal*	
	1974	*1979*	*1974*	*1979*	*1974*	*1979*
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Bradford West	17	11	78	88	5	1
Birmingham Sparkbrook	10	25	84	71	6	
Rochdale	6	12	42	43	49	44
Lambeth Norwood	16	28	64	60	18	10
Brent East	19	32	69	59	12	5
Leicester South	28	23	65	73	4	4
Croydon North East	21	43	51	44	28	13

This shows that in five of the seven constituencies, the proportion of voters who cast their vote for the Conservative Party increased. This increase was greater in some constituencies as against others. Over the whole of the results of the 1979 survey however, the highest recorded ethnic minority vote for the Conservative Party was at Croydon North East, where 22 per cent voted for the Conservative candidate. This was followed by 21 per cent in Glasgow Central, 20 per cent in Lambeth Norwood, 19 per cent in Newcastle North, 18 per cent in Hornsey Haringey and 14 per cent in Ealing Acton. Our observations showed that these were areas where the Conservative candidates took relatively greater interest in ethnic minorities.

This is further reinforced by an examination of the voting patterns among different ethnic groups. This analysis shows that ethnic minority 'swings' to the Conservative Party were largely accounted for by the voting pattern of Asian voters as against Afro-Caribbean voters. Whereas Afro-Caribbean voters solidly backed the Labour Party, Asian voters spread their votes between the Labour and Conservative Parties in such a way that higher proportions voted for the Conservtive Party in some constituencies vis a vis others. In 7 constituencies out of the 24 we surveyed, over 15 per cent of Asian voters cast their votes for the Conservative Party as Table 20 shows.

One of our local election surveys between the two elections and before Mrs Thatcher's 'swamping' remarks, showed increasing support among Asian for the Conservative Party. Some of this was clearly achieved by the individual candidates taking more interest in race relations and ethnic minorities in general and some by the efforts of the Conservative Central Office and the

TABLE 20: Support Among Asians for Conservative and Labour Candidates in Selected Constituencies

Constituency	*% vote for Con.*	*% vote for Labour*
Lambeth Norwood	40	60
Hornsey Haringey	33	67
Glasgow Central	31	69
Croydon North East	30	60
Ealing Acton	19	81
Newcastle North	18	77
Brent East	16	79

Anglo-Asian and Anglo-West Indian Conservative societies. The Conservative Party also put forward two Asian candidates for Parliament for the first time, and several Asian candidates to contest local elections. The question which arises therefore is how did ethnic minority groups influence the 1979 General Election results?

After examining the support for the Labour Party among ethnic minority voters, it is reasonable to conclude that with an even distribution of the 'ethnic vote' between the two parties, the Conservative Party would have won that General Election with an even greater majority than it did. On the other hand, ethnic minority voters clearly helped some Labour candidates, such as those who stood in Leicester South and Bradford West, to increase the Labour majority in those constituencies compared to the October 1974 General Election results. There are 87 constituencies in which ethnic minority residents constituted more than 5 per cent of the population. Table 21 lists forty-one of these in which the total number of ethnic minority residents exceeded the size of the majority of the successful candidate in each of the last three General Elections. Among these, the Labour Party held twenty-four in the May General Election, 1979.

It is worth stressing again that it is not only the actual number of ethnic minority voters in some constituencies which makes them 'important' it is also their relative concentration in these constituencies which places them in a position to influence the outcome of elections.

Our analysis shows that in some constituencies there were roughly as many ethnic minority voters on the Electoral Register as there were New Commonwealth and Pakistan born citizens recorded in the 1971 Census. For instance, there were over 11,000 Asian names on the Register in Leicester South (1971 NCWP 11,657), about 10,000 in Birmingham Sparkbrook (1971 NCWP 11,022) and almost 12,000 in Bradford West (1971 NCWP 14,830) and so on. When one looks at the proportion of the total electorate who are ethnic

TABLE 21: Constituencies With Majorities at Three General Elections Smaller Than the Number of New Commonwealth Residents in the 1971 Census

Constituency	*Total Population*	*NCWP Population*	*February 1974*		*October 1974*		*May 1979*	
			Majority	*Won by*	*Majority*	*Won by*	*Majority*	*Won by*
Birmingham Handsworth	69,870	12,885	1,623	Lab	3,896	Lab	3,209	Lab
Birmingham Ladywood	69,644	13,872	8,962	Lab	9,736	Lab	7,759	Lab
Birmingham Sparkbrook	75,530	11,022	7,405	Lab	8,521	Lab	8,319	Lab
Bolton West	68,434	3,603	603	Con	906	Lab (GAIN)	600	Lab
Bradford West	97,439	14,830	2,219	Lab	4,941	Lab	7,755	Lab
Brent East	90,582	13,978	7,622	Lab	8,972	Lab	6,343	Lab
Brent South	88,570	16,516	10,624	Lab	11,053	Lab	11,616	Lab
Bury & Radcliffe	105,583	1,196	345	Con	442	Lab (GAIN)	38	Lab
Camden Hampstead	84,462	5,907	2,257	Con	1,725	Con	3,681	Con
City of Westminster, Paddington	86,703	9,488	842	Lab	2,311	Lab	106	Con (GAIN)
Croydon North West	74,790	6,950	3,071	Con	1,479	Con	3,769	Con
Ealing Acton	83,679	6,156	1,451	Con	808	Con	5,798	Con
Ealing North	102,367	4,187	2,448	Lab	2,922	Lab	1,480	Con (GAIN)
Ealing Southall	109,562	22,579	8,812	Lab	9,983	Lab	11,278	Lab
Eton and Slough	89,642	8,456	6,891	Lab	7,663	Lab	1,340	Lab
Hackney North & Stoke Newington	77,813	11,156	9,334	Lab	10,553	Lab	5,221	Lab
Hammersmith Fulham	91,070	5,767	3,549	Lab	5,321	Lab	1,499	Con (GAIN)
Hammersmith North	89,576	9,890	7,041	Lab	8,122	Lab	3,506	Lab
Haringey Hornsey	89,398	12,901	2,208	Con	782	Con	4,037	Con
Haringey Tottenham	70,090	13,064	9,126	Lab	9,216	Lab	7,133	Lab

Constituency	Total Population	NCWP Population	February 1974 Majority	Won by	October 1974 Majority	Won by	May 1979 Majority	Won by
Hounslow Brentford & Isleworth	95,425	6,119	726	Con	232	Con	4,994	Con
Huddersfield West	71,353	4,617	630	Lab	1,364	Lab	1,508	Con (GAIN)
Islington North	65,347	9,679	6,628	Lab	6,818	Lab	4,456	Lab
Lambeth Central	72,454	10,481	7,369	Lab	8,677	Lab	5,976	Lab
Lambeth Norwood	77,355	9,133	4,022	Lab	4,771	Lab	1,940	Lab
Lambeth Streatham	76,568	6,867	4,475	Con	2,867	Con	5,500	Con
Leicester East	87,327	6,934	1,413	Lab	3,811	Lab	2,865	Lab
Leicester South	98,195	11,657	1,766	Con	1,133	Lab (GAIN)	1,998	Lab
Luton East	75,833	3,951	1,425	Lab	3,677	Lab	847	Con (GAIN)
Manchester Mosside	81,672	7,289	2,392	Lab	4,111	Lab	4,531	Lab
Nelson and Colne	64,228	2,032	177	Con	699	Lab (GAIN)	436	Con (GAIN)
Nottingham East	83,501	6,446	3,978	Lab	5,956	Lab	3,234	Lab
Oxford	95,317	3,657	821	Con	1,036	Lab (GAIN)	1,497	Con (GAIN)
Preston North	72,235	2,618	255	Lab	1,784	Lab	29	Con (GAIN)
Redbridge Ilford South	74,856	4,350	1,143	Lab	1,749	Lab	1,688	Con (GAIN)
Rochester and Chatham	110,483	2,908	843	Con	2,418	Lab	2,688	Con (GAIN)
Southwark Dulwich	91,430	7,854	5,341	Lab	7,459	Lab	122	Lab
Walsall South	81,808	6,592	1,580	Lab	4,662	Lab	1,588	Lab
Wandsworth Battersea South	67,240	8,725	1,653	Lab	2,851	Lab	332	Lab
Wandsworth Putney	88,426	3,577	1,439	Lab	2,775	Lab	2,630	Con (GAIN)
Wandsworth Tooting	76,273	8,757	6,108	Lab	7,855	Lab	5,200	Lab

minorities in individual constituencies, the importance of the 'ethnic vote' becomes even clearer.

It is also worth pointing out here that because of the Conservative Party's stand on immigration, some observers believe that the white anti-immigrant vote might have benefited the Conservatives. The evidence collected in the 1970 General Election showed that Enoch Powell's speeches on immigration before and during the campaign produced a national swing to the Conservatives and "an additional pro-Conservative swing in a number of all-white seats (many of them marginals) in the West Midlands"[22]. The publicity surrounding the Conservative's line of tight immigration control early last year produced a 3 per cent national 'swing' to the Conservatives (according to the February 1978 Gallup poll). Immigration became one of the three 'most urgent problems facing the country' and the Conservatives were preferred to Labour on the immigration problem by 53 per cent to 22 per cent of the sample studied in the Gallup poll[23].

The immigration issue did play some part in the 1979 election campaign. The post election analysis of swings showed that 'industrial factors and immigration' influenced the outcome of the 1979 election in some areas as *New Society* reported in July 1979[24].

In some areas with a large immigrant population such as Brent and Southall, there was no swing to the Conservatives, and parts of Bradford and Leicester actually 'swung' towards Labour. There is good reason to believe that this was mainly because of the substantial support among ethnic minorities for Labour. But in other immigrant areas, notably Islington, Hackney and Lambeth, the Conservatives did exceptionally well. Some analysts have suggested that this may have been the result of 'practical racist voting' by National Front sympathisers[25]. If this is so, then the Conservative Party's stand on immigration attracted protest voters in this election. Our own results show that at least 3 per cent of white voters who claimed to have voted for the National Front in October 1974 intended to vote Conservatives in the 1979 General Election.

In sum, it is primarily the concentration of ethnic minorities in some areas of Britain which has maximised their importance as voters. It is in the interest of political parties to involve them in the political process 'effectively' rather than just view them as voters. The Labour Party Race Action Group recently started a campaign "Don't take Black Votes for Granted" to urge their members to take practical steps to involve ethnic minorities in their activities at local levels and to show concern for issues which affect them. The Conservative Party's initiative in setting up a special unit in the Central Office to liaise and encourage ethnic minorities to join the party is a step in the right direction. The Liberal Party also tried to encourage the participation of ethnic minorities in its activities so much so that David Steel, the Liberal Party leader, once said on the

BBC TV Asian programme *Nai Zindgi Naya Jeevan* 'Election Special', that he would like to see members of ethnic minorities sitting in the House of Commons. He added that a system of proportional representation would help the interests of ethnic minorities in terms of their representation in the House of Commons.

We believe that the integration of ethnic minorities into the political process requires their 'effective' representation and involvement. They need to participate fully in the decision-making process; this will give them more confidence and make them feel that they are full citizens of this country rather than 'a problem' and one which is to be 'deplored'.

Chapter Five: Efforts Made by Political Parties and the Response of Ethnic Minorities

The policies of political parties which directly affect ethnic minorities (i.e. immigration and race relations matters) are usually presented in their national manifestos.

The Conserative Party's Manifesto stated, in this connection, that:[27]

"The rights of all British citizens legally settled here are equal before the law whatever their race, colour or creed. And their opportunities ought to be equal too. The ethnic minorities have already made a valuable contribution to the life of our nation. But firm immigration control for the future is essential if we are to achieve good community relations. It will end persistent fears about levels of immigration and will remove from those settled, and in many cases born here, the label of 'immigrant'.

(i) We shall introduce a new British Nationality Act to define entitlement to British citizenship and to the right of abode in this country. It will not adversely affect the right of anyone now permanently settled here.

(ii) We shall end the practice of allowing permanent settlement for those who come here for a temporary stay.

(iii) We shall limit entry of parents, grandparents and children over 18 to a small number of urgent compassionate cases.

(iv) We shall end the concession introduced by the Labour government in 1974 to husbands and male fiances.

(v) We shall severely restrict the issue of work permits.

(vi) We shall introduce a Register of those Commonwealth wives and children entitled to entry for settlement under the 1971 Immigration Act.

(vii) We shall then introduce a quota system, covering everyone outside the European Community, to control all entry for settlement.

(viii) We shall take firm action against illegal immigrants and overstayers and help those immigrants who genuinely wish to leave this country — but there can be no question of compulsory repatriation.

"We will encourage the improvement of language training in schools and factories and of training facilities for the young unemployed in the ethnic communities. But these measures will achieve litle without the effective control of immigration. That is essential for racial harmony in Britain today".

Unlike the 1974 Labour Party Manifesto, the 1979 one had much to say on these issues:

"Labour has already strengthened the legislation protecting minorities. The next Labour Government will continue to protect the community against discrimination and racialism. We will:

—Give strong lead by promoting equality of opportunity at work throughout the public sector;

—Help those whose first language is not English;

—Monitor all government and local authority services to ensure that minorities are receiving fair treatment;

—Consider what measures may be necessary to clarify the role of the Public Order Act and to strengthen and widen the scope of the Race Relations Act;

—Review the 1824 Vagrancy Act, with a view to the repeal of Section 4".

"Large-scale migration to this country is ending, but we will have some major commitments to fulfil. Labour will honour these. A quota would merely cause even longer delays for dependants"[28].

The Liberal Party Manifesto was more detailed and dealt with nationality and immigration matters as well as minority rights viz:[29]

"There should be only one class of citizenship for citizens of the U.K. and colonies. We would abolish the discrimination against non-patrials which creates second-class citizens. Citizens of the U.K. and colonies, including residents of Commonwalth countries who accepted the offer of remaining U.K. citizens when independence was granted, should have a right of entry. Spouses, children and other dependants of U.K. residents should be allowed to join their families in Britain and all children who have been born abroad of British mothers must have automatic right of citizenship. Liberals deplore the Tory policy of inflaming peopie's fears about unrestricted immigration when the numbers of immigrants are actually falling. We should, wherever practicable, accept *bona fide* refugees". On minority rights, it stated that:

"Britain is a diverse and multicultural society and Liberals rejoice in its richness, which owes much to the peoples of many different ethnic origins and cultures who have chosen to live here. We defend their right to maintain and develop their own traditions. Minority groups must be allowed to practise and advocate their beliefs, provided this does not reduce the freedom of others. We will protect and defend the rights of minorities by:

—A comprehensive law outlawing discrimination on grounds of race, sex or political belief with enforcement through a single Anti-Discrimination Board.

—Providing a legal right for nomadic people to live according to their life-style so long as this does not harm others;

—Removing all legal discrimination based on sexual orientation".

The National Front also had much to say on these matters[30].

However, and in spite of these declarations, race relations was not seen as a

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major issue by all three political parties. This was confirmed by the results of the candidates survey discussed earlier which showed that race relations was not rated highly by candidates. Similarly the findings of the electors survey showed that they rated race relations seventh out of the fourteen issues listed though ethnic minority electors rated it very highly and their white counterparts rated it twelfth out of the fourteen issues listed. Compared with unemployment and prices, therefore, race relations as such was not an important issue in the election for the majority of the population.

However, ethnic minorities were part of the electorate. Their potential role in the General Election had been well publicised by the media. Consequently, the three main political parties took steps to attract their support. For example, the Conservative and Labour parties advertised their policies in the ethnic minority press (particularly in the main Asian newspapers). The advertisement by the Conservative Party carried the headline "Why should you help Labour when it has failed to help you?" Leaders of all three political parties outlined their views in Asian newspapers. Labour candidates usually identified some specific action taken by the Labour Government in the field of race relations. Some Conservative and Liberal candidates from areas of high ethnic minority concentration, stressed their intentions to work for good race relations and equality of opportunity for ethnic minorities. Many candidates also participated in the activities of ethnic minority organisations such as annual dinners and some were interviewed on the BBC television Asian programme *Nai Zindagi Naya Jeevan* to explain the policies of their respective parties to Asian viewers.

A unit in the Community Affairs Department of the Conservative Central Office (set up in 1976 especially to win ethnic minority support) worked actively during the election campaign to arrange meetings between Conservative candidates and ethnic minority groups during the run up to the General Election on 3 May 1979.

Further, local meetings with ethnic minority groups were arranged to attract their support and party workers from ethnic minority communities were recruited by all three political parties to translate election addresses into Asian languages for the benefit of those who cannot read English, and to help in door to door canvassing. In some cases, meetings with ethnic minority electors were held at their places of work and Asian cinemas were used to address the Asian voters to seek their support.

How did ethnic minority electors respond? We have already mentioned in Chapter 4 that Asian turn-out was higher than non-Asian turn-out in almost all the areas covered in our research. But as far as the activities of ethnic minorities were concerned, we observed during our fieldwork, that ethnic minorities participated actively in the election campaign. In some constituencies, ethnic minority candidates were put forward by the political parties. These were:

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Major Narinder Saroop (Con) in Greenwich, Farooq Saleem (Con) in Glasgow Central, Russell Profitt (Lab) in Westminster South, Cecil Williams (Lib) in Nuneaton and Raj-Mal Singh (Lib) in Coventry North East. None of these won a seat, though the fact that ethnic minority candidates had been put forward may have created an incentive for ethnic minorities to participate in the election.

Did our respondents feel that ethnic minority participation in elections should be encouraged? We asked electors and candidates for their views on this. We found, surprisingly, that 32 per cent of the white respondents were opposed to their participation. Six per cent of Asian and 5 per cent of Afro-Caribbeans were also of this opinion. Table 22 presents the details.

TABLE 22: Ethnic Minority Participation in Politics – Voters

	Total	*White*	*Afro-Car*	*Asian*
	1138	*582*	*144*	*397*
	%	%	%	%
Yes, should be encouraged	65	58	78	71
No, should not	19	32	5	6
Unsure	16	10	17	23

More white people intending to vote Conservative were opposed to the participation (42%) of ethnic minorities in politics than were those intending to vote Labour (24%). Conservative *candidates* on the other hand, in line with other main party candidates, were generally in favour of encouraging ethnic minorities to participate in politics. Only 6 per cent of Conservative candidates and 2 per cent of Liberal candidates thought that they should *not* be encouraged to participate. No Labour candidate was of this opinion. On the other hand, 83 per cent Conservatives, 98 per cent Labour and 92 per cent Liberals, were in favour of the view that ethnic minorities should be encouraged to participate in British politics.

If ethnic minorities should be encouraged to participate in politics, what form should their patricipation take? How can this be achieved? Our results showed that twenty-two per cent of voters felt that ethnic minority groups should be represented by having politicians in the three main political parties. Almost as many (21%) thought that they should be encouraged to participate in *all* aspects of political life, while 12 per cent suggested that ethnic minorities should be involved at local level. Thirteen per cent of respondents did not specify the form of participation which they had in mind but felt that ethnic minorities should have a say in the running of the country since they live here.

TABLE 23: Ethnic Minority Participation in Politics – Candidates

	Total	*Con*	*Lab*	*Lib*
	542	*219*	*107*	*216*
	%	*%*	*%*	*%*
Yes, should be encouraged	89	83	98	92
No, should not	3	6	-	2
Unsure	8	11	2	6

Generally, opinion on this issue did not differ substantially between voters of different ethnic backgrounds.

Those who were opposed to ethnic minority participation in politics were asked the reasons for their view. Seventeen per cent felt that members of ethnic minority groups were unable to understand the problems of British people, British customs and politics. Sixteen per cent replied that "Britain should be governed by the British/by white people", and a further twelve per cent felt that encouraging participation would lead to ethnic minorities 'taking over' in politics. Nine per cent of respondents put their case even more strongly by saying that ethnic minorities had 'no right' to say how Britain should be governed.

Which political party did they feel is most likely to encourage ethnic minorities to participate in the political process? Thirty-seven per cent of voters felt that the Labour Party is most likely to do so compared to 5 per cent who thought the Conservative Party is most likely to do so. White people were marginally more likely (7%) to think the Conservatives were encouraging participation than were either Afro-Caribbean (1%) or Asians (4%). Fourteen per cent thought there was no party which was encouraging participation. It is interesting to see that of those white people who intended to vote Conservatives, only 14 per cent thought the Conservatives were actually taking steps to encourage ethnic minority groups, while many more (31%) considered Labour to be doing so. This suggests that many white Conservative supporters were not aware of the efforts which the Conservative Party was making in this connection.

When questioned about the various ways by which the influence of ethnic minority groups on British politics might be increased, the majority (58%) of respondents were of the view that minority groups should get more involved in the present set-up rather than create their own political parties (14%). Indeed, Afro-Caribbeans were particularly enthusiastic (71%) about minority groups involving themselves in the present set-up, while 60 per cent of Asians interviewed were also of this opinion. Table 24 presents details.

TABLE 24: Involvement in the Present Political Set-up: Voters

	Total	*White*	*Afro-Car*	*Asian*
	1138	*582*	*144*	*397*
	%	*%*	*%*	*%*
Getting more involved in the present political set-up	58	53	71	60
Having their own party	14	17	10	11
Neither of these	13	22	3	4
Unsure	16	8	17	25

By comparing data from the 1974 survey with our current findings, we can see that opinion has increased slightly in favour of ethnic minorities participating in the activities of existing political parties. In 1974, 48 per cent of respondents were in favour of this idea compared to 58 per cent in 1979. The greatest change of opinion occurred among the white population (16% as against increases of 10% among Afro-Caribbeans and 2% among Asians). We welcome this development.

It is also encouraging to note that over three-quarters (77%) of candidates were in favour of ethnic minority groups becoming more involved in the existing political set-up. Labour (96%) and Liberal candidates (94%) were slightly more likely to favour their involvement in this way than Conservative candidates (85%).

Ethnic Minority Candidates

One way to examine the integration of ethnic minorities into the political process is to look at the number of candidates adopted by the main political parties because it is by incorporating such minorities into the political system not as nominal but as effective members who participate actively in the decision-making process that their alienation can be prevented[31]. To draw from American experience; "The number of blacks registered to vote in the eleven Southern States increased between 1962 and 1974 from one and a half million to three and a half million (though there were two million eligible black voters still unregistered). That vote was reflected in their representation. By 1974 in the whole of the United States there was one black Senator, sixteen members of the House of Representatives and one hundred and eight Mayors. For the first time in the history of the U.S. apart from the brief, false dawn after the Civil War, blacks had been incorporated within the political system of the U.S. and black political aspirations had a legitimate and constitutional means

of expression. The psychological effect of this revolution was as important as the strictly political"[32].

In Britain, since the Second World War there have been no MPs from ethnic minority groups, although there have been two West Indian members of the House of Lords, Lord Constantine and Lord Pitt, and more recently Lord Chitnis, an Asian. There have also been a number of Parliamentary candidates who were members of minority groups. The most notable of these was Lord (then Dr) Pitt, who contested Hampstead in 1959 and Clapham in 1970 for Labour. Another Labour candidate was Councillor Bashir Maan who fought East Fife in February 1974. Since 1970 the Liberals have put forward many more candidates from ethnic minorities compared to the other parties, e.g. Mr Preetam Singh (Sheffield Hallam), Mr Mihir Gupta (Smethwick) and Mr Ghulam Musa (Bradford East) in 1970; Dr Dhani Prem (Coventry South-East) in February 1974 and Mr Cecil Williams (Birmingham, Sparkbrook) in October 1974. There have, however, been a number of 'fringe' candidates from ethnic minorities including Mr Dharam Dass (Wolverhampton, South-West, 1970), Mr Saeed-uz-Zafar (British Commonwealth candidate, Birmingham Small Heath, 1970), Mr Tonderai Makoni (Howden, 1970), Mr Baldev Singh Chalal (Anti-Helmet candidate, Ealing Southall, February 1974), Mr Tariq Ali (International Marxist, Sheffield, Attercliffe, February 1974) Mr Sylvester Smart (Workers Revolutionary Party, Lambeth Central, February and October 1974), Mr Ekins Brome (Marxist-Leninist, Lambeth Central, February 1974) and Mr Chandra Rao (Hampstead, October 1974).

As we mentioned earlier, five candidates were put forward by the three main political parties for the General Election, 1979. These were:

Name of the Candidate	*Constituency*	*Party*
Farooq Saleem	Glasgow Central	Conservative
Maj. N. Saroop	Greenwich	Conservative
Russell Profitt	Westminster South	Labour
Cecil Williams	Nuneaton	Liberal
Raj-Mal Singh	Coventry, N.E.	Liberal

In the event, none of these was elected. How did they 'perform' as candidates and how did their party performance in 1974 compare with that of ethnic minority candidates in 1979? Our analysis showed that the two Conservative candidates, in line with the general trend, actually improved their party's votes in their respective constituencies. The one Labour also performed as well as the national trend for Labour could have suggested; but the two Liberal candidates did badly (Table 25 presents the details). This could have had something to do with, among others, the nationwide reduction in the Liberal share of the vote which occurred in 1979 compared with the 1974 elections. Another reason could have been the fact that Mr Singh in Coventry

North-East was adopted by Liberals just before the 1979 election and Mr Williams received a divided Liberal support when he was adopted in Nuneaton.

TABLE 25: Share of Votes Received by Ethnic Minority Candidates in 1979 and previous electoral performance of that Party

		Party share in:		
		May	*Feb*	*Oct*
Candidate	*Constituency*	*1979*	*1974*	*1974*
Farooq Saleem (Con)	Glasgow Central	1934	3435	1880
		(16.4%)	(21.4%)	(13%)
Maj. N. Saroop (Con)	Greenwich	12133	11294	9249
		(33.3%)	(28.7%)	(26.8%)
Russell Profitt (Lab)	City of London	7067	8698	8589
	Westminster Sth	(25.4%)	(27.3%)	(30.9%)
Raj-Mal Singh (Lib)	Coventry North East	2291	-	6846
		(4.9%)		(15.4%)
Cecil Williams (Lib)	Nuneaton	6184	12591	10729
		(9.8%)	(19.8%)	(18.6%)

The Response of Ethnic Minorities

Let us turn to the ethnic minorities response again. We have described some of the local activities in which ethnic minorities participated during the election campaign. Ethnic minority organisations also issued political statements in support of various parties.

The Standing Conference of Pakistani Organisations (SCOPO) advised its members and other Pakistanis to vote Liberal in constituencies where the Liberal candidate had an advantage but otherwise to vote Labour. On the other hand, the President of the Confederation of Indian Organisations made a public plea for Asians to vote Conservative[33].

The Black People's Manisfesto Conference also issued a Black People's Manifesto on 21 April, 1979. It outlined the problems facing ethnic minority communities in Britain and demanded action on sixteen specific issues which would promote racial equality[34]. This Manifesto was sent to the leaders of the major political parties and candidates standing in areas with ethnic minority electors.

One Punjabi paper, the *Punjab Times*, advised its readers to exercise discretion and objective judgement in the use of their vote. Its editorial stated that "The policies and approaches of both the major parties to many problems including immigration are very similar. Given that situation, an individual elector should vote for the one which can help him the most at the time of need"[35]. In *Des Perdes*, one correspondent wrote "As active thoughtful

citizens, it is our duty despite being Labour voters to stop Labour imposing Tory policies upon us, both locally and nationally"[36].

Bengali papers — *Banglar Dak, Janomot, Jagaran* and *Bangladesh Weekly* — also covered election issues. The *Janomot* pointed out that of the three political parties, David Steel's Liberals stood out as the only one worth supporting. "Unfortunately, however, the Liberals stand no chance of forming the next government. The choice before us, therefore are two evils, and we have to choose the lesser of the two". It added that every Bangldeshi should exercise his fundamental right and vote in the General Election[37].

The Hindi paper, *Amar Deep,* also gave a good coverage of the electoral issues, in particular of those affecting ethnic minorities during the election campaign[38].

Similarly, the Gujarati press gave a good coverage to the election campaign and the General Election results. There were full editorials on the election in *Garavi Gujarat* and *Gujarat Samachar.* For instance, *Garavi Gujarat* commented that the Tories believe in family life on the one hand but are tightening immigration regulaltions unfairly on the other. It also provided ample space for readers' discussions of electoral issues before the elections. *Gujarat Samachar* also made considerable efforts to involve its readers in discussions of electoral issues. In the week leading up to the General Election, it brought out a special issue in which it advised its readers to exercise their franchise on May 3 and outlined the policies of the various political parties[39].

The *Urdu* press also took a great deal of interest in the 1979 General Election and gave extensive coverage to election issues and the campaign. The common message in all six *Urdu* papers was that Pakistanis should vote in the election. The *Daily Jang* wrote an editorial "The May Elections and the Asians" in which, after spelling out the problems facing Asians and their children settled here, it asked its readers to attend election meetings in their areas and ask the respective party candidates for solutions to their problems[40]. The *Daily Jang* also published a survey it had conducted among Asian voters[41]. In its editorial on election day, it stressed that the immigration policies of the three political parties would determine the reactions of immigrant voters. *The Daily Millat* also published messages and photographs of some candidates; after presenting an analysis of the policies of all political parties, it advised its readers to vote for the Labour Party[42].

The three Urdu weeklies, *Mashriq, Azad* and *Akhbare-e-Watan* also published editorials about the election and gave extensive coverage to the election campaign generally. The *Mashriq,* published manifestos of the three main political parties and in one of its editorials said of the various parties that "they are all opposed to immigrants and yet they cannot ignore them"[43]. The *Akhbare-e-Watan* also wrote an editorial on May 2 entitled "The General Election: Britain and Immigrants" in which it reminded immigrants that their

votes are important since they have linked their own and their children's future with the destinies of this country[44]. In the *Azad* a correspondent suggested that all Asian voters should demand a statement of intent from candidates in their area to work for the achievement of a just and equitable society[45]. The *Ravi* of Bradford advised its readers: "In the past, Labour governments have not been all that admirable; but compared to the Tories, they have at least done something. Your votes, however, should go to Labour because it is better to have something than nothing at all"[46]. That part of the ethnic press which is published in English also gave extensive coverage to election issues especially those concerned with race and immigration[47].

In sum, ethnic minority communities participated fully in the General Election campaign as well as in the actual election either through the ethnic minority organisations to which they belong, through the ethnic minority press in which matters pertaining to race relations and immigration featured significantly or took part in the campaigning activities of the main political parties. It is clear from our data that their influence in the political life of the nation is likely to increase in the future rather than decrease especially as the majority of voters and candidates we surveyed welcome their participation.

Chapter Six: The Anti-Immigrant Vote[48]

In its manifesto for the 1979 General Election, the National Front declared its commitment to the compulsory repatriation of all coloured British citizens including those who were born in this country. It repeated myths, misconceptions and inaccuracies about immigration and race relations. This was entirely in keeping with their policy of repatriating African, Asian, and West Indian immigrants, including coloured people born in Britain, which they announced in 1974. As a *Guardian* reporter wrote at the time: "The National Front themselves keep returning to the question of race, worrying at it as if it were the key to Britain's misfortunes; . . . the National Front have discovered an easily identifiable scapegoat".

Their appraoch to electioneering created conflict between different groups most notably in Southall and Leicester which was harmful to community relations, especially in areas of immigrant concentration where their election meetings often led to clashes between the National Front and left wing opponents or immigrant groups[49]. To what extent were their expectations in the General Election borne out by events? Let us examine their performance.

First, let us see how they performed in previous elections. In the 1970 General Election, the National Front contested ten seats, six of them in Greater London. In the 30 by-elections between the 1970 and the February 1974 General Elections, they contested only five. In February 1974, the National Front put forward 54 candidates and qualified for a nation-wide five-minute television party political broadcast to which every poltical party with 50 or more candidates is entitled. This publicity encouraged the National Front to field 90 candidates in the October 1974 General Election. Thirty-five of these were from the Greater London area, seventeen from the North and the rest from other parts of the country. Unlike the three major political parties, it was concerned *inter alia* with stirring up antipathy towards coloured immigrants for electoral purposes by means of agitational marches and by distributing anti-immigrant literature. In the 1979 General Election, the National Front contested 303 seats and spent £45,300 in lost deposits in the event. All their candidates lost their deposits as they did in the 1974 elections.

From their previous electoral record, it is clear that in spite of the publicity they received over these years, their electoral support fell from an average 3.6 per cent of the vote in 1970 to 3.3 per cent in February 1974, to 3.1 per cent in

October 1974 and 1.4 per cent in the 1979 General Election. In Parliamentary by-elections, their absolute share of the poll was better, but it also fell from 5.5 per cent in 1968-70 and 6.8 per cent in 1970-73 to 4.4 per cent in 1975-78. The slump in its share of the vote in the 1979 General Election reflected a worse performance than in the October 1974 General Election when it put up 90 candidates and polled between 2,000 and 3,000 votes in a number of constituencies. Only one candidate this time polled more than 2,000. The party made strenuous efforts in Greater London by contesting all but four of the 92 seats as it did in past elections and achieved its highest poll in this area. It obtained its second highest poll in Hackney South and Shoreditch where it polled 1,958 compared with 2,544 in October 1974.

In assessing the performance of political parties, it is usual to compare the share of the vote achieved by these parties in the same constituencies over two or more elections. Such a comparison assumes constant conditions in these constituencies, e.g. no changes in constituency boundaries between elections and no changes in the number of parties involved. There were no boundary changes for the 1979 election but the National Front did not contest 10 out of the 90 seats which they fought in October 1974; this reduces the number of comparable constituencies over the two elections to 80. These, however, have to be further reduced by two because there was a Liberal candidate in these constituencies in 1974 but not in 1979. One then had a comparable situation in 78 constituencies; in every one of these, the Front's share of votes fell consistently. This fall can be measured by expressing the 1979 share as a percentage of the October, 1974 share. Thus where their share in 1979 was 1.0 per cent but in 1974 it was 2.0 per cent, one could express their share in 1979 as having been 50 per cent of the previous one. This may be called the 'retention rate'.

The average retention rate for all the 78 constituencies which are comparable was 55.6 per cent. In only 12 constituencies did the retention rate exceed 75 per cent and in only 8 constituencies did it fall below 35 per cent. There were 11 seats in the Industrial North in which the average decline in the National Front's vote in 1979 was 37.8 per cent of its 1974 share. Indeed 6 of the 8 seats where this retention rate fell to less than 35 per cent were in the Industrial North. In the rest of England, the average retention rates were higher; 53.8 per cent in the South East, 54.5 per cent in the Midlands and 59.8 per cent in London. London was the area where the National Front came closest to approachng its 1974 performance and 9 of the 12 constituencies where retention rates exceeded 75 per cent were in the GLC area.

Another method often used to indicate a party's performance, particularly in the popular press, is to refer to their position 'past the winning post' (as in horse-racing). Accordingly, in the GLC elections in 1977, the National Front was in front of the Liberals in 32 out of the 92 London constituencies. In May,

1979 the National Front never came anywhere near the Liberals and in 36 constituencies they also fell behind the minority parties. They were beaten by the Nationalist parties not only in the five seats in Wales and the one seat in Scotland which they fought, but also in the three seats where they clashed with Mebyon Kernow in Cornwall. Where they both put up candidates, the Ecology Party attracted more votes than the National Front; the Ecology Party was ahead of the Front in 17 instances and behind in only 7. There were also 11 other candidates, including two Communists and one Christian 'Stop Abortion' candidate who gained more votes than candidates from the National Front.

Regional Support

If one examines the variations in support for the National Front in different regions, a remarkable pattern emerges as in Table 26.

TABLE 26: British General Election May 1979 – The Regional Pattern of National Front Support

	Seats Contested by NF	*Total Seats*	*% Proportion Contested*	*% Average Share of Poll*
London	88	92	95.7	2.17
South East England	62	99	62.6	1.12
West Midlands	34	56	60.7	1.57
East Midlands	23	39	59.0	1.22
East Anglia	8	17	47.0	0.87
South West England	21	45	46.6	0.64
Yorks/Humberside	25	55	45.5	0.85
NW England	31	75	41.3	1.00
Northern England	5	38	13.1	0.72
Wales	4	36	11.1	0.57
Scotland	1	71	1.4	0.23

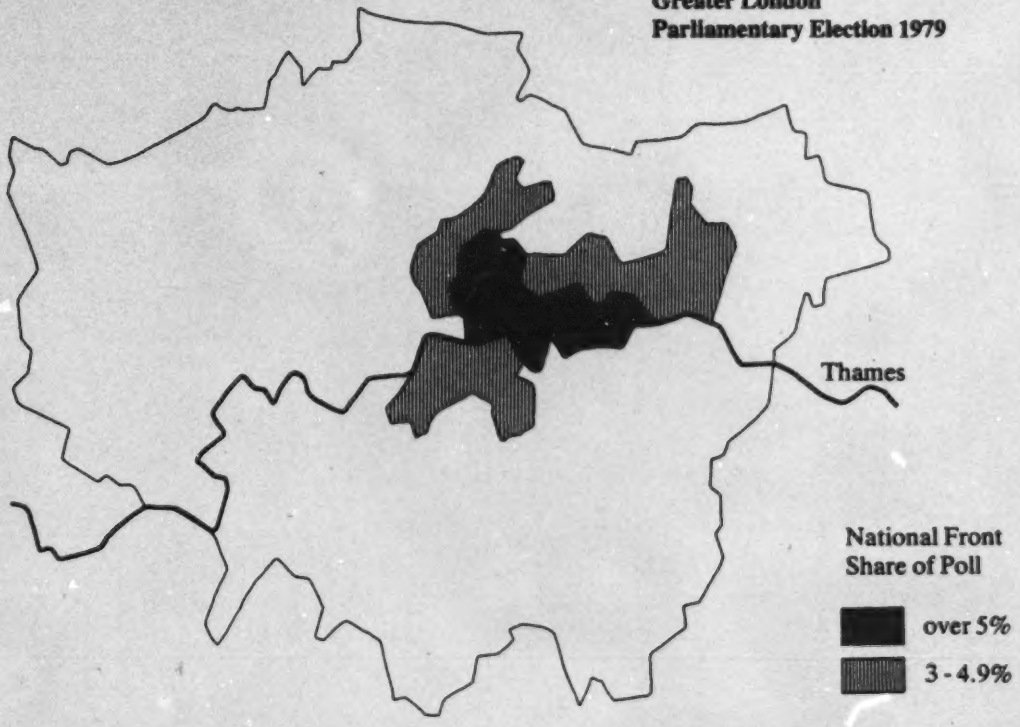
Greater London
Parliamentary Election 1979
Thames
National Front
Share of Poll
over 5%
3 - 4.9%

Figure 2

This table shows that the Front concentrated its efforts in London, contested 95.7 per cent of seats there and achieved 2 per cent of the poll. Further, they contested roughly 60 per cent of seats in the South East and in the Midlands. They achieved their lowest level of support in the far north of England and in Scotland and Wales.

It is interesting to note the constituencies which the Front did not contest. In the West Midlands, where their share of the vote was relatively good, there were no candidates in Birmingham Ladywood, Handsworth or Sparkbrook. These three constituencies, according to the 1971 Census, had the largest proportion of residents of New Commonwealth origin in the West Midlands area. Ladywood is particularly surprising since in the August 1977 parliamentary by-election, the National Front candidate (with 5.7% of the vote), took third place and the Liberal candidate came fourth. It is also interesting to note that the party did not contest either of the two seats in Huddersfield, where, ten years earlier, they believed that they were making a real impact on the population.

Support in Various Constituencies

Clearly the region which showed the highest level of support for the National Front was London. Within London itself, there was also a consistent pattern of support. There were five constituencies in England where the National Front achieved a share of more than 5 per cent of the vote and these were all in the East End of London (comprising the boroughs of Tower Hamlets and adjacent parts of Hackney and Newham). There were a further thirteen London constituencies where their share of the vote exceeded 3 per cent and these were all in the neighbourhood of that area as Fig. 2 shows. This larger area takes in the remainder of Newham and Hackney, the whole of Barking and part of Islington with Waltham Forest to the north of the river, and, to the south of the river, parts of Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark.

Within Greater London, the constituencies in which the National Front attracted the smallest share of the poll were also located quite distinctively. If one takes into account the four constituencie which the National Front did not contest and the sixteen in which their share of the poll was no higher than 1.2 per cent, a clear pattern emerges. There is an almost unbroken chain of constituencies right across the extreme south from Orpington westwards to Twickenham which then follows the river up to Chelsea and north through Kensington and Hampstead to Hendon and Hornsey. In these constituencies they received relatively little support.

The tendency was then for constituencies in the East End to support the Front; the areas in which their share of the poll was low are mainly in the West End extending to the southern part of London. The sixteen with relatively high National Front support were all won by Labour, and the sixteen with the

relatively low support for the Front, plus the four not contested, were all won by the Conservatives. These geographical and political patterns are, themselves, associated with the social class distribution in various areas. This factor appears to be a significant one in explaining geographical variations in the support they received in London.

Away from London, the association between working class areas and a relatively large share of the poll for the National Front is not maintained. The cities of Hull and Sheffield, which are predominantly working class and also areas of Labour strength, comprise nine constituencies in which the average National Front share was 0.8 per cent. In Manchester and Liverpool, the National Front contested seven constituencies and their average share of the votes was under 1 per cent.

A few examples given in Table 27 illustrate their declining vote.

TABLE 27: Percentage of votes cast for the National Front in May 1979, October 1974 and February 1974 General Elections by constituency (A Select List)

	February 1974 %	*October 1974* %	*May 1979* %
Blackburn	4.2	4.4	1.5
Bolton East	2.6	2.4	1.0
Manchester Openshaw	1.8	-	0.6
Preston South	-	1.7	0.6
Liverpool Walton	1.7	-	0.7
Rochdale	3.7	4.1	1.4
Wallasey	-	1.5	0.9
Brent East	-	2.9	1.8
Hackney North & Stoke Newington	3.7	3.7	3.0
Hornsey (Haringey)	-	2.4	0.8
Leicester South	3.0	4.1	1.7

* This table includes some of the strongholds of the National Front such as Blackburn, Hackney and Leicester.

On the other hand at Fylde South, where the Conservatives had the largest majority in Great Britain, the National Front candidate had a better result than his colleagues in the northern cities.

It might be argued that to focus on northern seaside areas and cities with relatively few citizens of New Commonwealth origin could be misleading. The purpose of this analysis, however, is to strees that social class is, by itself, inadequate to account for variations in the level of support for the National

Front; other factors such as the presence of coloured people and a reasonably strong group of National Front activists are just as important.

Northern industrial constituencies which have or have had groups of National Front activists and which also have ethnic minorities did not, in all instances, have National Front candidates in 1979 but in 13 such constituencies the average share of the poll achieved by the Front was only 1.1 per cent. These 13 were all textile towns and returned 11 Labour members, a Liberal and a Conservative, the latter having the smallest majority in the country. This 1.1 per cent share scarcely differs from that in the other cities referred to previously and remains below the average of 1.4 per cent in the four Conservative constituencies in the Blackpool/Fylde area (Table 28 presents details for the industrial constituencies).

TABLE 28: British General Election May 1979 — The National Front's percentage Share of the Poll in Selected Areas other than London

(a) 13 Northern Industrial Constituencies		*(b) Leicester Area*	
Accrington	1.3	Blaby	3.6
Blackburn	1.5	Harborough	1.8
Bolton East	1.0	Leicester East	2.7
Bolton West	0.9	Leicester South	1.8
Bradford North	1.3	Leicester West	2.7
Bradford South	0.8	(Average 2.5%)	
Bradford	1.4	*(c) 5 'Black Country' Districts*	
Halifax	0.9	Dudley East	2.0
Keighley	0.5	Walsall North	2.1
Oldham West	1.5	Walsall South	1.8
Rochdale	1.4	Warley East	3.1
Preston North	0.8	W. Bromwich East	2.9
Preston North	1.4	W. Bromwich West	3.4
(Average 1.1%)		Wolverhampton NE	2.7
		Wolverhampton SE	3.1
		Wolverhampton SW	1.8
		(Average 2.5%)	

In the East and West Midlands, the level of support for the National Front was higher and its pattern did not differ significantly from that of earlier elections. In the East Midlands, the strongest support, though much reduced, was in and around Leicester. In that city and in the two adjacent constituencies where the party put up candidates, the National Front's average share of the vote was 2.5 per cent (Table 28). In the five comparable constituencies in and

around Nottingham, their share was 1.0 per cent (this was also their average for the rest of the East Midlands).

Within the West Midlands region, the National Front also attracted up to 2.5 per cent of the vote in one area (Table 28). This area comprises 11 constituencies, 9 with National Front candidates, in the five towns of Dudley, Walsall, Warley, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton. In the rest of that region, including Birmingham and Coventry, the National Front contested 25 constituencies but achieved only 1.2 per cent of the vote.

National Front Candidates

As we mentioned above, the existence of groups of activists is one of the factors associated with the slightly higher levels of electoral support for the National Front in a place such as Leicester. This may leave the impression that there is a body of determined people who form the core of the party; this is undoubtedly so. However, the party also has a peripheral element among its supporters.

This element can be assessed by considering the proportion of those who, having fought for the party in the election of October, 1974, 'soldiered on' and fought for their party again in 1979. The proportion of this kind of candidate is surprisingly low since only 25 of the 90 candidates who contested the election in October 1974 re-appeared as candidates in May, 1979. This figure is increased to 28 if we include those who were candidates in either February or October, 1974. Those who stand as candidates are normally regarded as being among the top rank of activists; on this criterion, candidates put up by the Front had a 'persistence rate' which was as low as 28 per cent in 1979. This suggests that the party had poor quality 'activists'. It is worth mentioning here that other minority parties had much higher rates of 'persistence'.

The impression that the party had a core of activists derives largely from the fact that it contained 'husband and wife' teams among its candidates. In addition to these married groups, there were candidates who were probably related to each other, standing in adjacent constituencies. Such families are not usually easily identifiable; for instance, there were six candidates named Jones, five named Smith and four named Roberts who fought the election in 1979. Further, it was known, in several other instances, that candidates were related to each other. For example, Mr May and Mrs May who fought two of the Hackney seats and Mr Parker and Mrs Parker who fought the two Walsall seats are married and the two Spinks who fought in Leeds and York respectively are also married. It would appear from the evidence, that there were eighteen families who put up more than one of their members as candidates in 1979. On the face of it then, it would appear that the Front contained a number of close-knit activists; in reality, there were so few activists that they had to 'search' within their own families for people who were willing to stand as candidates for their party. In this sense, family participation was also a sign of

their weakness.

One reason for contesting a large number of seats, which is apparent from the National Front tactics, was to obtain more publicity. After the October, 1974 General Election, Martin Webster, national organiser of the Front, suggested that putting forward many candidates was worth the money in lost deposits just to get publicity for the party; "where else could you buy five minutes on both television channels for thirteen-and-a-half grand"[50]. Their demonstrations and counter-demonstrations, as was recently evident in Southall, Leicester and other areas, brought the National Front even more publicity. But ultimately the best criterion for estimating the National Front's support among British people is their performance at the ballot box. And this was, as we indicated earlier, disastrous to say the least. Further, not a single candidate was put forward for the European Parliamentary Election a few weeks later. In effect, the widespread view that the National Front has become a viable political party like the three main parties is not borne out by our evidence. It remains a 'one issue party', a 'protest party' and a 'pressure group' against immigration and immigrants. This is illustrated by the fact that the National Front polled better in areas containing ethnic minorities. In 31 constituencies which the Front contested in the February 1974 election, they obtained an average of 3.9 per cent of the vote in those constituencies where

TABLE 29: 1979 General Election Results

	Total vote received	*% of all votes*	*% of total electorate*	*Seats gained*	*Seats lost*	*Final total*
Conservative	13,697,753	43.9	33.3	61	6	339
Labour	11,506,741	36.9	28.0	11	51	268
Liberal	4,305,324	13.8	10.5	0	3	11
SNP	504,259	1.6	1.2	0	9	2
Plaid Cymru	132,544	0.4	0.3	0	1	2
Nat. Front	191,706	0.6	0.5	0	0	0
Others	883,952	2.8	2.4	2*	4	13

* 2 Democratic Unionist gains from Official Unionist

Percentage poll: 76.0 percent. Swing to Conservatives: 5.2 percent
Total number of seats changing hands: 74
Highest swing to Conservative: 13.9 Barking
Highest swing to Labour: 4.4 Glasgow Cathcart
Highest majority (excluding Northern Ireland): E L Gardner (Con). Fylde South, 32,247.
Lowest majority: R Atkins (Con). Preston North, 29.

over five per cent of residents are from the New Commonwealth while in 23 with fewer ethnic minorities, their average was only 2.1 per cent.

The Conservative Party's stand on immigration probably helped to attract 'protest voters' to that party in the May 1979 General Election. As one correspondent wrote: " . . . the issue of race caused a swing to the Conservatives of no more than 0.75 per cent, which is considerably less than the foreign press in particular have suggested. We find that without this support, the Conservatives would have won 16 fewer seats from Labour, leaving the Tories with a total of merely 323 seats"[51]. The overall position of the political parties in this election was as shown in Table 29.

To conclude, there is some consistency in the pattern of support for the National Front. The same pattern of support was observed in October, 1974 and May, 1979 and at intervening local elections. Broadly, they received relatively strong support consistently in the Leicester, London and in the Wolverhampton/West Bromwich areas.

Within these areas, certain constituencies showed relatively strong support for the Front. In the city of Leicester, three constituencies stand out. The strongest support for the Front was in Leicester East and the weakest was in Leicester South. This pattern is consistent with that which emerged from the General Elections of February 1974 and October 1974.

Similarly, in Greater London, the pattern of support for the Front during the GLC elections of 1977 was almost identical to that which they received in the Parliamentary Election of 1979; as we showed earlier, they received their strongest support from the same five East End constituencies.

This suggests that there is a consistent element among voters who support the National Front but that in May, 1979, this element declined right down to a hard and perhaps desperate core of stalwarts compared to the three main political parties.

We asked respondents, during our survey, whether there were any political parties which they feel should be banned. Over half of the respondents (57%) felt that there was one party which they would like to see banned. Of these, 88 per cent identified that party as the National Front; 97 per cent of Afro-Caribbeans and 96 per cent of Asians were of this opinion compared to 79 per cent of our white respondents who also called for its banning — an overwhelming response. The only other party which was mentioned in this context was the Communist Party. Twenty per cent of white respondents, 2 per cent of Afro-Caribbeans and 1 per cent of Asians would like to see the Communist Party banned.

What our analysis shows is that in spite of the publicity which the National Front receives in the media, the majority of the British public — irrespective of their race or colour — are opposed to its extremist ideology and policies. The view that the Front enjoys a widespread support is, therefore, a myth.

Chapter Seven: Summary and Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to monitor the participation of ethnic minorities in the General Election, 1979 in order to:

(a) identify the role which was played in that election by ethnic minorities and thus establish the extent to which they are involved in the political process and

(b) indicate the extent to which ethnic minorities in this country are being integrated into the life of this community with specific reference to the scale and nature of their participation in the political process.

Summary of Findings

The main findings of this study are:

1. Fewer ethnic minority people were registered on the Electoral Register compared to their white counterparts. Just under a quarter (22%) had not been registred compared with 7 per cent of whites living in the same areas. There were some variations between areas; in some areas only 10 per cent of ethnic minority people who were eligible to vote were not on the Electoral Register. Compared with the results of the 1974 study, the level of registration among ethnic minorities has improved considerably but has not changed significantly among the indigenous community (93% in 1979, as against 94% in 1974). Among Afro-Caribbeans, the level of registration has risen by 18 per cent (81% in 1979 as against 63% in 1974). The level of registration among Asians has not increased substantially (77% in 1979 as against 73% in 1974).

2. Ethnic minority and white respondents rated two issues — prices and unemployment — to be the most important ones out of a list of 14 election issues. With regard to the third most highly rated issue, education, respondents from the Afro-Caribbean community rated it more highly than others. Improving race relations was rated 7th out of 14 issues.

3. Ethnic minority respondents rated the improvement of matters concerning race relations higher than white voters. They saw it as being of top priority; however, white respondents rated it 12th out of 14 issues.

4. If the differential rating of this issue by ethnic minority and white voters is interesting, the rating of candidates from different parties is even more interesting. Labour and Liberal candidates rated the need for improvement in race relations more highly than Conservative candidates.

5. With regard to respondents' assessment of the relationship between white and ethnic minority groups in the country, 32 per cent felt that this was getting worse. But within this overall figure, white people were least optimistic with 37 per cent of them feeling that the situation has become worse compared with 29 per cent of Afro-Caribbeans and 27 per cent Asians. On the other hand, only 19 per cent of candidates standing for election considered that relations between white people and ethnic minority groups in the country as a whole were getting worse as against 35 per cent who felt that the situation has not changed significantly.

6. One in three of our white respondents were opposed to the view that "ethnic minority groups should be encouraged to take a more active role in politics". In this connection, more white people intending to vote for the Conservative Party were opposed to this view (42%). Nevertheless, Conservative Party candidates were, in line with candidates from the other main parties, generally in favour of encouraging ethnic minority groups to participate in politics; only 6 per cent of Conservative candidates and 2 per cent of Liberal candidates felt that they should not be encouraged in this way. No Labour Party candidate was of this opinion.

7. The majority of respondents interviewed were able to recall the name of their Labour candidates but few knew the names of candidates standing for election on behalf of other political parties.

8. Ethnic minority voters reflected a higher rate of turnout compared to white voters. For example, if Asians are compared with non-Asians, the Asian turnout recorded in our survey was higher than that of non-Asians in 18 of the 19 constituencies which we monitored. This was also true with regard to the European Assembly Election on June 8, 1979. Their higher rate of turn-out underlines their impact as voters.

9. In terms of the evidence resulting from our study of voting patterns on election day, we found that more ethnic minority voters 'supported' the Labour Party than did the electorate as a whole in the areas covered in our study. This response was partly based on the belief among respondents that the Labour Party had a good record of dealing with ethnic minority groups and was, in any event, sympathetic to their problems. However, we found that in some of the constituencies studied, support for the Conservative Party among Asians was as high as 30 per cent. Liberals also got their support in some constituencies.

10. In view of this, it seems likely that with an even distribution of the 'ethnic vote' between the two major parties, the Conservative Party would have won the General Election in 1979 with an even bigger majority than they did.

11. Anti-Immigrant candidates were generally rejected by voters. Further, fifty-seven per cent of our sample were in favour of banning *a* political party. Of these, ninety-seven per cent of Afro-Caribbeans, ninety-six per cent of Asians and seventy-nine per cent of white voters, were of this view.

12. In the light of the above findings, it is reasonable to conclude that not only did members of ethnic minority communities fully participate in the General Election in May, 1979 but that they are likely to have an increasing influence in British politics in the future as participants rather than as subjects for debate and controversy.

Notes and References

1. See Muhammad Anwar and David Kohler *Participation of Ethnic Minorities in the General Election, October 1974,* Community Relations Commission, 1975.
2. Muhammad Anwar and David Kohler *op. cit.*
3. In 1974 it was discovered that ethnic minorities favoured 'building more schools' compared with white respondents from the same areas. See Muhammad Anwar and David Kohler *op. cit.*
4. To compare the results with 1974 survey only nine issues were included.
5. In 1975, it was found that feelings between white and coloured people were 'getting better' (32%), 'remaining same' (37%) and 'getting worse' (20%). For details see *Some of My Best Friends,* Community Relations Commission, 1976.
6. Lindsay Mackie, *The Guardian,* April 23, 1979.
7. *Ibid.*
8. Muhammad Anwar and David Kohler *op. cit.*
9. *Daily Telegraph,* April 30, 1979.
10. For a fuller discussion of this point, see Muhammad Anwar, *The Myth of Return: Pakistanis in Britain,* London, Heinemann, 1979. Chapter on Ethnic Group Mobilisation & Political Participation, pp. 136-157.
11. For list see Table 1 in Muhammad Anwar and David Kohler *op. cit.*
12. Mike Phillips "Wooing the Black Electorate" *New Statesman,* 20th April 1979.
13. R L Leonard, *Elections in Britain,* London, D Van Nostrand Company, 1968, p. 16.
14. See P G Gray & Francis A Gee, *Electoral Registration for Parliamentary Elections,* London, Government Social Survey, 1967.
15. See Nicholas Deakin (ed), *Colour and the British Electorate 1964,* London Pall Mall Press, 1965, for such details.
16. Muhammad Anwar and David Kohler. *op. cit.*
17. See Muhammed Anwar, "Voting Patterns Among the Asians", in *Parties, Politics and the Asian Community,* London, National Association of Asian Youth, 1979.
18. See M J Le Lohe, "Participation in Elections by Asians in Bradford" in Ivor Crewe (ed) *British Sociology Year Book: The Politics of Race* Vol. 2, London, Croom Helm Ltd., 1975, pp. 84-122.
19. See Muhammad Anwar, 1979 *op. cit.* and CRC *op. cit.*

20. Out of this, 22% whites, 28% Afro-Caribbeans and 27% Asians were members of Trade Unions.
21. Another poll taken during the election campaign showed 18.4 per cent support for Conservatives among Asians. See *Daily Express* April 9, 1979.
22. Ivor Crewe, "The Black, Brown and Green Votes" *New Society*, 12 April, 1979, pp. 76-78.
23. Ibid.
24. *New Society*, 26 July 1979.
25. *Ibid.*
26. This programme was shown on Sunday 29 April 1979.
27. See *Conservative Party Manifesto*, Conservative Central Office 1979, pp. 20 and 21.
28. See *The Labour Party is the Better Way*, Labour Party, 1979, p. 29.
29. See *The Real Fight is for Britain*, Liberal Party Publications Department, 1979, pp. 8 and 9.
30. See *It's Our Country – Let's Win it Back*, National Front, 1979, p. 45.
31. Mark Bonham Carter *Comparative Approaches to the Resolution of Racial Conflict*. A keynote address delivered on the Fifteenth Anniversary of the South African Institute of Race Relations, July 1979.
32. *Ibid.*
33. *Daily Telegraph, 2 May 1979.*
34. See *Black People's Manifesto*, Black People's Manifesto Conference, 1979.
35. See Raminder Singh "The British Election and the Punjabi Press". *The Asian*, Vol. 2, No. 2.
36. *Ibid.*
37. For a detailed coverage of the General Election by the Bengali Press see *The Asian*, Vol. II, No. 6.
38. See issues of *Amar Deep* published at the time of the election.
39. See relevant issues of *Garavi Gujarat* and *Gujarat Samachar*.
40. See *Daily Jang*, March 31, 1979.
41. For details see *Daily Jang*, May 2, 1979.
42. *The Millat*, May 3, 1979.
43. *Mashriq Weekly*. all issues published during the election campaign (19, 25 April, 2 May, 1979)
44. *Akhbar-e-Watan Weekly*, May 2, 1979.
45. See *Azad* Weekly, all issues published during the election campaign.
46. See two issues of *Ravi* published in April for detailed coverage.
47. For detailed coverage see, in particular, the *Asian*, the *Asian Express*, *India Weekly*, *New Life*, *Race Today*, *West Indian World*, *West Indian Digest*, and the *Post* – all issues published during the election campaign.
48. We are grateful to Dr M Le Lohe for helping us with the analysis for the

anti-immigrant vote.

49. Parts of this chapter were published in *The Asian*, Vol. II, No. 6. See Muhammad Anwar "The Potential of National Front Support".
50. *The Times*, October 12, 1974.
51. *The Economist*, June 2, 1979.

Technical Appendix

Research Methodology

This report is based on the results of four surveys, the fieldwork for which was done by the Opinion Research Centre. These are:

1. The Registration Survey
2. Issues Survey
3. Voting Pattern on Election Day Survey, and
4. The Candidates Survey

The fieldwork was done in 24 Parliamentary constituencies throughout the country. The criteria used for choosing these constituencies were as follows:

1. Seven constituencies covered in October 1974 Study were studied again.
2. Five constituencies with ethnic minority candidates standing for the three major political parties were included.
3. Twelve constituencies were selected at random from over 60 constituencies in those areas where the 'ethnic vote' could influence the result.

Seventeen of these 24 constituencies were held by Labour, six by Conservatives and one by Liberals, at the time of the 1979 General Election.

1. **Registration Survey** (Sample = 1,927)

The aim of this survey was to establish whether people who were eligible to vote were on the Electoral Register and could thereby exercise their right to vote.

Details of Fieldwork

Interviewing was carried out in 24 constituencies spread throughout the country. The same constituencies and indeed selected streets within a particular polling district were also used as interviewing areas for the Issues Survey. The following were the areas covered:

Constituency	*Ward*	*Polling Dist.*	*Nos. covered*
1. Birmingham Sparkbrook	Sparkhill	BBJ	80
2. Brent East	Queens Park	E1A	72
3. Bradford West	Manningham	11A	84

Constituency	*Ward*	*Polling Dist.*	*Nos. covered*
4. Bristol North East	Easton	EE	73
5. Coventry North East	Upper Stoke	NC	82
6. Croydon North East	Thornton Heath	7A	62
7. Ealing Acton	Heathfield	DF	83
8. Glasgow Central	City	CE06	88
9. Greenwich	Greenwich	33A1	100
10. Hackney North and Stoke Newington	North Defoe	EC1	76
11. Haringey Hornsey	Hornsey Central	HC2	98
12. Lambeth Norwood	Knights HIll	NU	51
13. Leicester South	Spinney Hill	DA	70
14. Manchester Ardwick	Longsight	ALA	59
15. Newcastle-upon-Tyne, N.	Wingrove	NC	86
16. Nuneaton	Abbey	ED	94
17. Preston North	Fishwick	AA	74
18. Rochdale	Central & Falinge	2	100
19. Sheffield Heeley	Heeley	JB	56
20. Southampton Itchen	St Lukes	HE	73
21. Walsall South	St Mathews	YE2	121
22. Wandsworth, Battersea S.	Balham	KD	93
23. City of London: Westminster South	Churchill	SW	63
24. Wolverhampton South West	Gaisley	NH	89

2. **Issues Survey** (Sample = 1,138)

The Issues Survey was undertaken to establish respondents' attitudes to a number of political issues as well as their impressions of the policies of the main political parties. Particular emphasis was placed on issues concerning race and the involvement of ethnic minorities in British politics.

The fieldwork for this survey was carried out three weeks before Election Day, when the political parties were presenting their manifestos to the public. Interviewing was carried out in the same 24 constituencies and polling districts mentioned above. Quota controls were set to ensure that those interviewed were representative of the popultion of the area. Quotas were set on age, class, and ethnic group (in this case defined as 'white' and 'non-white'). Interviews were conducted in the respondents own home, in a personal face-to-face situation using a structured interview schedule.

The demographic details of the survey sample were as follows:

Place of birth: Fifty-one per cent of the sample were born in the United Kingdom. Sixteen per cent were from India, 11 per cent from Pakistan, 10 per cent the West Indies, 3 per cent from Kenya and 1 per cent from East Africa. Of those born in the United Kingdom, 94 per cent were white and 3 per cent Asian and Afro-Caribbeans respectively.

Social Class: The majority of respondents (73%) were from the C2DE socio-economic groups. Those ethnic minority respondents were more likely to be in this category than whites.

Age: Interviews were undertaken with all age groups including 18 year olds.

3. Voting Patterns on Election Day

The two main objectives of this survey were:

(ii) To measure the turnout at each polling station, as well as the proportion of voters who were White, Asian, Afro-Caribbean and people of other ethnic groups.

(ii) To collect details of voting behaviour as people left the polling stations. This was undertaken by asking voters to complete mock ballot papers as they left the polling booths. Completed ballot papers were coded to identify the ethnic groups of the respondent and thereby enable analysis of the voting behaviour of different ethnic groups to be carried out.

This survey was carried out in the following 24 constituencies:

Constituency	*Ward*	*Polling Station*
1. Birmingham Sparkbrook	Sparkhill	Congregational Church Hall,
2. Brent East	Queens Park	Kensal Rise School, Harvest Road
3. Bradford West	Manningham	Green Lane School, Green Lane, Bradford
4. Bristol North East	Easton	St Marks Parish Hall, St Marks Road
5. Coventry North East	Upper Stoke	Heath Road Sunday School
6. Croydon North East	Thornton Heath	Beaulah Junior School
7. Ealing Acton	Heathfield	St Marys Church Hall, Rectory Road, W3.
8. Glasgow Central	City	Garnet Bank School, Renfrew Street
9. Greenwich	Burrage	Upper School, Broomfield Road
10. Hackney North and Stoke Newington	North Defoe	William Patten School, Church Street
11. Harringey Hornsey	Hornsey Central	Methodist Church Hall, Middle Lane, N8.

12. Lambeth Norwood	Knights Hill	St Lukes West Norwood, Church of England School, Elder Road
13. Leicester South	Spinney Hill	St James Church Room, St James Terrace
14. Manchester Ardwick	Longsight	Central High School, Daisy Bank Road
15. Newcastle-upon-Tyne N.	Wingrove	Westgate Hill Primary School, Bishops Avenue
16. Nuneaton	Abbey	St Johns Ambulance Hall, Junction of Anns Street & Princes Avenue
17. Preston North	Fishwick	Temporary Polling Station, Junction of Anns Street & Fishwick Parade
18. Rochdale	Central & Falinge	Castlemere School
19. Sheffield Heeley	Heeley	Salvation Army Citadel, K[illegible]t Road
20. Southampton Itchen	St Lukes	St Lukes Church Music Room
21. Walsall South	St Mathews	St Mary's the Mount Parish Hall, Glebe Street
22. Wandsworth Battersea S.	Balham	Henry Cavendish School, Cavendish Road
23. City of London & Westminster South	Churchill	Youth Club, 1 Ebury Bridge Road
24. Wolverhampton S West	Gaisley	United Reform Church Hall, Claremont Road

In addition to this, 8 polling stations (four in Bradford West, three in Rochdale, and one in Burnley) were covered for us by students from Bradford University under the supervision of Dr M. Le Lohe in order to monitor 'turnout' only. These polling stations are outlined in Table 13 in the main body of the report.

For the 'Voting Patterns Survey', respondents were selected according to a sampling interval calculated from the official record of the proportion of the electorate assigned to each polling station. In some areas where it was felt that too few non-white people may be selected, the sampling interval was decreased.

Previous research had indicated that voting behaviour differed between early and late voters; because of this, the sampling interval was adjusted to ensure that interviewing took place thoughout the day (7 am to 10 pm). In addition, where a respondent refused to particiate, a substitute of the same ethnic group was selected.

4. **Candidates Survey**

This survey was designed to explore the attitudes of candidates to a number of political issues, especially those concerned with immigration and race relations.

A total of 1,692 self-completion questionnaires were sent to candidates from the Conservative, Labour, Liberal, National Front, Communist, Scottish Nationalist and Welsh Nationalist parties. These were sent out three weeks before Election Day. 667 questionnaires were completed by candidates and returned and form the basis of the analysis in the body of the report.

The demographic characteristics of those candidates who returned the quesionnaires were as follows:

Party	*Number*	*%*
Conservative	219	33
Liberal	216	32
Labour	107	16
National Front	94	14
Scottish Nationalist	19	3
Welsh Nationalist	6	1
Communist	6	1
Total:	667	100

Since only a few candidates from the Scottish, Welsh Nationalist and Communist parties returned completed questionnaires, they were excluded from the analysis.

Among the Conservatives, the proportion of candidates elected was similar to that of those who were not; but among Labour only 10 per cent of those who replied were elected and 90 per cent were not.

A third (33%) of the respondents were aged between 18 and 34 years, with the majority (53%) being between 35 and 54 years of age. Only 10 per cent of those who returned a questionnaire were 55 and over. Many more Labour Party candidates (48%) were in the younger age group (18 to 34 years) than were candidates from other parties, viz; Conservative 25 per cent, Liberal 35 per cent, National Front 34 per cent.

As might be expected, candidates had a wide variety of professional backgrounds, viz:

Lecturer/Teacher/Head Master	16%
Barrister/Solicitor	9%
Engineer/Technician/Journalist/Writer/Author	4%

Manager (Unspecified)	4%
Consultant/Industrial or Commercial Advisor	4%

Other professions were mentioned by fewer than 4 per cent of candidates.

Compared with 33 per cent of Labour and 25 per cent of Liberal candidates, only 5 per cent of Conservative candidates were classified as lecturers/teachers. Only 2 per cent of National Front candidates fell into this category. The popular professions among Conservative candidates were barristers or solicitors, accountants, farmers, company directors or consultants. National Front candidates were likely to be engineers or technicians, managers, skilled manual workers, students, housewives or retired persons.

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